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ABSTRACT

The document, one in a series of seven reports from the Value of Children Project, discusses results of the survey in Japan. Interviews with 360 respondents provided data for the research. The volume is presented in six chapters. Chapters I and II describe the rationale, methodology, and the research sample. Chapters III and IV detail advantages and disadvantages and perceived economic costs and benefits of children. Chapter V focuses on family size preferences: family planning knowledge, attitudes, and practices; and predictions of family size and planning. Chapter VI summarizes findings, methodological problems, research needs, and issues related to population policy. Findings indicate that Japanese parents consider emotional rewards, childrearing satisfaction, personal development of the parent, and benefits to the family unit as important advantages. Disadvantages include restrictions on alternative activities, financial costs, and emotional strain. Methodology problems included objections to some of the personal questions and translation from the original English language questionnaire. Future research should investigate how values of children would change if Japan were further developed economically and industrially and what substitutes for the pleasures of children could be derived. A conclusion relevant to population issues is that imposing stringent policies to limit or influence family size would not work. Success could be found only in educating the public about population and environmental conditions and then waiting for individual action. (KC)

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volume six

the value of children

a cross-national study

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preface

The rapid industrialization and urbanization that have taken place in Japan especially since the Second World War have drastically transformed the structure of the socioeconomic system of the country, which in turn has affected the pattern of fertility. This fertility transition has attracted the attention of demographers and other population scientists. To investigate the process, some cross-sectional methodological approaches have been used to trace the relationship between macrodemographic trends and the individual patterns of behavior that have influenced them.

Nationwide knowledge, attitude, and practice (KAP) surveys, initiated by the Mainichi Newspapers, Inc., in 1950, have partially fulfilled this purpose. But these studies of childbearing and contraceptive behavior do not fully explain how each individual considers fertility in his or her socioeconomic context, or in the temporal and dynamic context of social change.

To fill the gap, a study has been needed that explores cognitive and behavioral aspects of how young couples view children, how such views reflect certain trends when they are grouped into socioeconomic strata, and how these views about children may be related to fertility change in the country as a whole. The study described in this monograph provides considerable information about such issues. Although the research was undertaken during the period of 1972–73, the findings are considered still valid, describing in some detail the attitudes of young couples toward children and shedding light on the fertility decline in the present socioeconomic context.

In addition, this study is part of a collaborative cross-national investigation undertaken in five other countries—the Republic of Korea, the Philippines, the Republic of China (Taiwan), Thailand, and the United States (Hawaii). The reader who wishes to compare the present findings with those of the other countries should consult the other volumes in this publication series. Volume 1 (Arnold et al., 1975) presents comparative results; the remaining volumes provide more detailed findings from the individual countries.

In carrying out this research, I have been indebted to many people. First, I should like to thank Mr. Shoji Suzuki, who was involved in this study from the beginning, helping to plan and carry out the research, and who was responsible for the final phase of the data analysis. Professor Kiyoshi Shima of Musashino Women's College kindly offered the use of his office as the administrative center for the study and gave us much valuable advice beginning in the pilot study phase.

Next, I should like to thank all the interviewers and coders for their painstaking efforts at the time of the interviews and during the period of data analysis. Without their help, the investigation would never have been possible. I would also like to thank all the personnel who gave us advice on sampling and arranged the urban and rural interviewing. Much credit goes to the statisticians at the office of the prime minister, to personnel at the Institute of Population Studies, to the public health officials of Saitama, Niigata, and Ibaraki Prefectures, and to other local health personnel of the interviewed areas.

I should like to thank those who served as occasional consultants for this project, especially the late Dr. Minoru Tachi, former director of the Institute of Population Problems at the Ministry of Health and Welfare, and Dr. Toshio Kuroda, its subsequent director. Thanks are also due to Mr. Shinichi Mihara, former executive director of the Population Research Council of Mainichi Newspapers, Inc., who helped me to organize a special research group for this project and who introduced a sponsoring organization, the Family Planning Federation of Japan, for the foreign grant. I should like to thank Mr. Chojiro Kunii, executive secretary of the Family Planning Federation, who wholeheartedly offered the Federation as the sponsoring organ for the project grant.

I should also like to thank all the Asian and American coinvestigators of this project, to whom I owe a great intellectual debt—Drs. Fred Arnold, Rodolfo A. Bulatao, Chalio Buripakdi, Sung Jun Lee, and Tsong-Shien Wu. Special thanks must also go to the Ford Foundation

and the Office of Population of the U.S. Agency for International Development for their generous financial support of the study.

Finally I should like to thank Mr. Don Yoder and all the staff members at the East-West Population Institute, in particular Ms. Sonia C. Albores and Ms. Sandra Ward, for their comments and editorial suggestions, and especially Dr. James T. Fawcett, who introduced me to the research and was coordinator, supervisor, and adviser throughout this innovative study.

1

introduction

In a recent provocative essay Fawcett (1970:1) has remarked: "A population is made up of people, and psychology is the study of people. Yet, there have been few historical intersections between demography, the science that studies populations statistically, and psychology, the science that studies people behaviorally." His monograph reviews the scarce population psychology literature existing up to 1970—for example, KAP studies, clinical and psychoanalytic studies of childbirth, personality factors in fertility surveys, persuasive communications, psychological factors in the acceptance of contraception and abortion, modernity and fertility, and psychological consequences of family size and population density. Fawcett characterizes the studies as dealing only with certain specific aspects of human reproductive behavior. Together, he asserts, they fail to provide a comprehensive framework for explaining the underlying causal mechanisms governing individual fertility behavior, which in turn affects group fertility, a central demographic problem.

Thus, a pertinent issue for psychologists is not the superficial measurement of people's attitudes and behavior that are evident in traditional KAP and fertility surveys, but rather analysis of the genesis of their motivation for childbearing and how actual fertility planning and behavior are conceived in relation to their daily lives or their goals of self-actualization. In this connection, it becomes necessary to study in a broad framework the personal values that directly or indirectly influence fertility. Fertility behavior may also arise in part from a deep substratum of consciousness that dominates thought and feeling, with

influence on such practical behaviors as marriage, contraception, and the rearing of children.

It is likely that individual values and behavior may differ across groups, being affected to a certain extent by one's sociocultural and environmental milieu. For example, values toward children held by people of upper socioeconomic status are likely to be different from those held by people of lower socioeconomic status; people's attitudes toward contraception may also vary depending upon their socioeconomic milieu (e.g., urban middle-class or rural). What kinds of relationships exist between these factors? To investigate these relationships in an interdisciplinary and comprehensive manner is the purpose of the Value of Children investigation.

However, before describing the study and discussing the results, it is pertinent to introduce the conceptual scheme of human values used in the investigation, and to consider how these values contribute to the underlying process of human fertility behavior, contraception, and other related population phenomena in general.

Values defined

Value can be defined as one's personal regard for certain objects, persons, or events. The degree to which one regards a certain object can be expressed in terms of weight, importance, respect, worth, or merit. We call a state of personal feeling "value." Thus a value is a feeling accompanied by perceiving, imagining, or thinking about that object. In a mode of one's consciousness, such a feeling can be organized into a system of structures: a hierarchy of values.

The investigation of values goes back to the German philosopher Eduard Spranger (1928), who insisted that at least six major values operate in the conduct of people's lives: theoretical, economic, political, aesthetic, social, and religious values. Everyone is supposed to have these six values in a hierarchical order, and one value is supposed to be supreme. A person's striving is thus governed by a system of values dominated by a specific one (political, for example), which in turn determines one's choice of career. It is not the purpose of this report to evaluate the validity of Spranger's thesis, but one can say at least that such a system of values may in fact determine one's way of living. An attitude toward objects can thus be viewed within such a hierarchy of one's system of values: money, children, maintenance of peace, scientific curiosity. A number of objects and events can be classified according to one's value system, which is itself a manifestation of a structural relationship between objects and events. If a person were

asked to classify health, affection, peace, welfare, and staple foods in order of their importance, his ordering would reflect his value system at the time. Moreover, if we question a person about a specific object and ask him about this thing from different angles, his responses will reflect his value system.

A value can also be concrete. It can exist in object-means or goals-instrumental relationships. Affection, for example, may be regarded as one index of the maintenance of interpersonal relations, and thus it can be classified as an abstract interpersonal value. To love children is a specific manifestation of affection, and thus it can be regarded as concrete. It can also be seen that one way to experience affection is to love children. Therefore children may be regarded as a means or instrument for the realization of affection (goal or object). Thus a value or mode of feeling toward an object can operate in a very complex relationship—concrete at one time and abstract at another, goal or object at one time and means or instrument at another—depending on how it evokes a special meaning within one's system of values, which itself may develop and change from time to time.

Aims and content of the study

This report investigates parents' values regarding children. While setting aside the complex process and nature of the value problem, let us first focus on the objects to be studied: children and parents. Children are complex living organisms. Always changing, they are influenced by their milieu and sociocultural setting, and by behavioral norms and practices. Parents are the roots of their offspring. They enable their children to survive during the course of the children's becoming. If we stress the side of the parents and study their conceptions about children, we should analyze the underlying process to see how conceptions about children operate under certain conditions. What constitute the value components of children? In what conditions are these components organized?

Our central concern is with the individual makeup of parents, how they perceive children as "valuable objects." It is conceivable that values are concerned with the conditions of living organisms coping with an environment and thus determine our way of looking at things. Applying this situation to parental action toward children, we find that parents plan for, embrace, reject, praise, or scold children, depending on how they value them. Our concern will focus on analyzing parents' motivations. How are motivations toward children aroused and maintained under specific conditions? How do they influence attitudes toward bearing or rearing children?

Relying on the above conceptual framework, the present investigation explores various dimensions of values attached to children by parents. While deferring a more detailed theoretical discussion for the final chapter, I believe it is worthwhile mentioning here at least three general dimensions of values that may be conceived to reflect individual and group values. They are psychological-affective values, utility values, and combined and complex values of costs and benefits, all of which are composed of positive and negative aspects.

The questionnaire used to explore these dimensions in the Value of Children (VOC) Study consisted of about 400 items, including open-ended questions and structured or semi-structured items.[1] The strategy was to use multiple methods of measurement for the same or related variables to assess the validity of the findings. Unstructured questions were generally posed early in the interviews, so that answers to them would not be influenced by the structured items. The following value dimensions of respondents were investigated.

Value-of-children dimension

1 Advantages of having children compared with not having children
2 Disadvantages of having children compared with not having children
3 Reasons why most people want children
4 Importance of having at least one daughter and at least one son
5 Reasons for wanting daughters and sons (both personality and utility dimensions)
6 Strength of boy preference (the combined value of personality and utility dimensions)
7 Reasons for wanting another child (17 structured items, all describing positive fertility motivations)
8 Reasons for not wanting another child (nine structured items that describe negative fertility motivations)
9 Beliefs about children and childbearing (Likert-type attitude scale consisting of 45 positive and negative items)

Several items were directly concerned with utility dimensions of the value of children:

10 Economic and practical help expected from sons and daughters
11 Expectation of children as a source of financial support in the future

1 See Appendix A in Arnold et al. (1975) for the English version of the core questionnaire used in all six countries.

12 Expectation of living with children in the future
13 Perceived cost of children: whether children are seen as an economic benefit or cost; number of children respondent could raise before suffering a heavy financial burden; effect of doubled income on wanted family size; effect of free education on wanted family size; perceived burden of educational costs
14 Perceived changes in the functions of children: whether there are generational changes in children's willingness to give money to parents, live with parents, support parents in old age, help with chores or business

Family-size dimension

The questionnaire included items reflecting the combination of affective-psychological and utility values, as well as societal beliefs and values formed in particular socio-cultural contexts. These items were:

1 Number of additional children wanted
2 Reasons for not wanting fewer children
3 Reasons for not wanting more children
4 Ideal number of boys and girls
5 Ideal ordering of sex of children
6 Definition of a small and a large family
7 Beliefs about the effects of large or small family size on the child

Moderator dimension

The moderator dimension reflects external or environmental constraints that serve to facilitate or control respondents' fertility motivations by influencing, directly or indirectly, their attitudes, beliefs, and values about having and rearing children. The items used in the questionnaire concerned:

1 Attitudinal modernity
2 Mass-media exposure
3 Ownership of consumer durables
4 Communication with spouse about family size
5 Communication with spouse about contraception
6 Relative influence of husband and wife in decision-making
7 Which spouse had a stronger desire for children
8 Pressure from others regarding contraception, abortion, family size
9 Religion
10 Educational aspirations for children
11 Perceived adequacy of income and relative economic status

Birth control dimension

Several items explored respondents' attitudes toward fertility control:

1 Awareness of, knowledge about, and use of contraceptive methods
2 General opinion about contraception
3 Attitude toward use of contraception in specific circumstances
4 General opinion about abortion
5 Attitude toward use of abortion in specific circumstances

Respondent's status

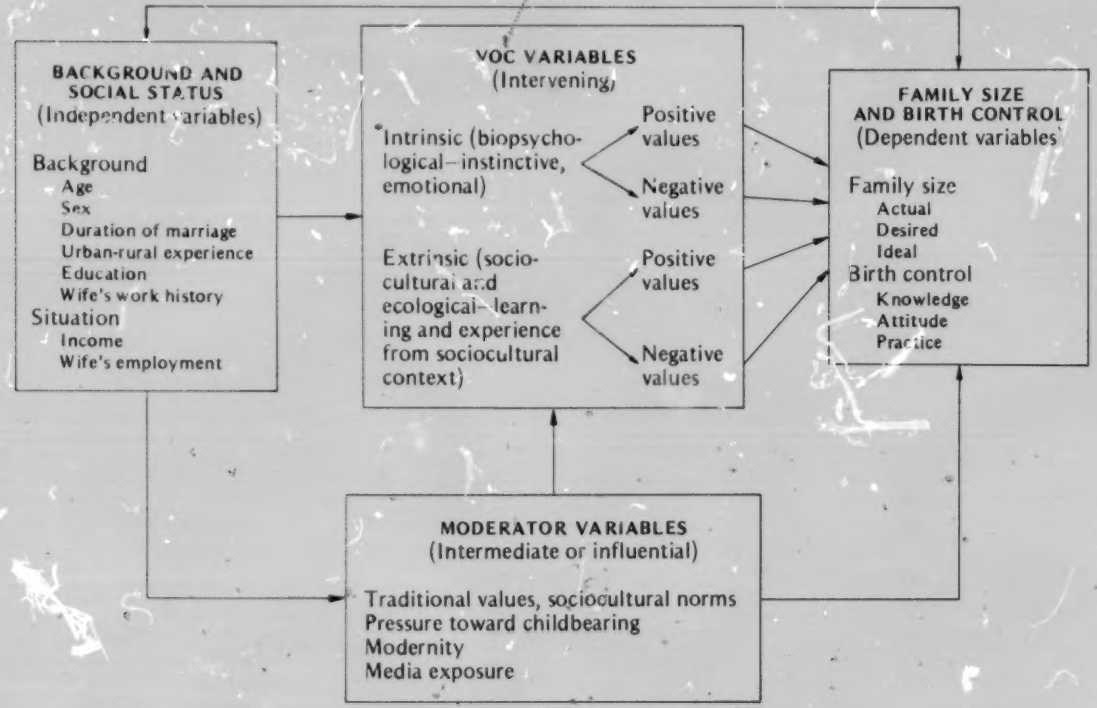
Finally, approximately 40 items on such standard sociodemographic dimensions as age, marital history, education, occupation, income, urban and rural experience, education and occupation of parents, birth order, and number of own or adopted children were included in the questionnaire.

Our central concern was to assess the role of the value-of-children variables in respondents' childbearing decisions. How did these values function with special reference to respondents' background—e.g., age, education, social class, marital history, parity? Did the VOC variables influence—or were they influenced by—the moderator dimension (media exposure, educational aspirations, decision-making about family, cultural norms and practices)? Did they contribute to respondents' choice of a certain family size or conceptions about ideal or wanted family size?

For the purpose of the study, we made an ad hoc assumption about the underlying operation of these variables. Using a cause-effect model, we assumed respondents' background and social status to be independent variables, the family-size and birth control dimensions to be dependent variables, the value-of-children dimension to be intervening between the independent and dependent dimensions, and the moderator dimension also to be intermediate or influential variables.

Figure 1.1 illustrates the conceptual approach to the study. It is a simplified representation and does not show many interactions and feedback effects, but it is useful as a heuristic device. The general scheme it represents has guided the design of the research and our analysis of the data. The next chapter will describe the research methodology and the characteristics of the VOC sample in Japan. Subsequent chapters will present research findings and interpretation of the results.

Figure 1.1 Conceptualized relationships among sociodemographic factors, VOC variables, and fertility



2

methodology and sample

Planning for the international Value of Children Study was initiated at the East-West Population Institute in Honolulu in late 1971. A core research group for Japan was organized in February 1972 at the invitation of the study's coordinator. Heading the Japanese research group were the author and Kiyoshi Shima of Musashino Women's College. Shoji Suzuki and Toshimi Nakajō participated as chief research staff members. In addition, a group of interviewers was organized on an ad hoc basis to conduct the field interviews. The research team included several coders who were responsible for data analysis. Representatives from an English language school translated the original questionnaire into Japanese. Secretarial help was provided by a member of Japan Marketing Education, Inc.

A workshop was held at the East-West Population Institute in April 1972 to design and plan the comparative research (see Fawcett, 1972). Afterward, communications were exchanged among the coinvestigators regarding the design of the questionnaire, method of interviewing, data coding, analysis of data, and format of the report. In July and August of 1972, a pilot survey was conducted with a pretest questionnaire, drafted for use in all six countries participating in the study. Ten urban and five rural couples were chosen for the pretest in Japan. Results from all of the pilot tests were tabulated and the questionnaire was revised. In November the revised questionnaire was translated into Japanese. To ensure the correctness of translation, a back-translation was performed. During the latter part of November, discussions were held with specialists concerning the field procedures to be used, in particular the hiring and training of interviewers and the sampling method.

In December, field interviews for the rural area were administered by 34 interviewers with the cooperation of local health personnel at municipal and prefectural offices. Interviews in the urban area were completed by 39 interviewers in January 1973. We first wrote letters requesting cooperation from each household in the randomly selected sample.

Responses to structured questions were coded in January and February; we used the standardized VOC coding instruction manual, which was translated into Japanese. A second workshop of project directors took place in Hong Kong late in February, at which coding schemes were devised for the open-ended questions. After the workshop, we coded the unstructured responses. A Japanese research assistant was sent to the East-West Population Institute to conduct further analysis of the data. We then constructed tables from the computerized data. In August, project directors of each country gathered at the East-West Population Institute to discuss the format for the final reports. The principal investigators then prepared the reports for their countries.

Interviews

Survey interviews were the basic means of collecting data for this study. The VOC questionnaire included items with diverse formats—open-ended questions followed by intensive probes, Likert-type attitude scales, and standard opinion and information items. To explore relationships of the various components of values ascribed to children, multiple measures were obtained of the same or similar dimensions.

The interviewers, mainly graduate students, were volunteers from the Tokyo University of Education, Tokyo Teachers' College, the University of Tokyo, Musashi University, and Musashino Women's College. These interviewers had at least some experience of interviewing in their major academic fields of psychology and sociology. Altogether, 65 were employed for the urban and rural surveys. Prior to the interviews, they received about ten hours of training. For the rural interviews three groups were organized, each consisting of 12 persons. Each interviewer was assigned two couples (four respondents) to interview per day. In the urban area, four interviewers on the average were assigned to each of 12 selected quarters in which each interviewer interviewed three couples (six respondents) within a week. The interview time per respondent averaged 80 minutes, but length of interviews ranged between one and two hours.

Interviews were scheduled at the convenience of respondents. For those working outside the home (mainly husbands), usually evenings,

Sundays, or Saturday afternoons were chosen. For those engaged in domestic duties (mainly wives), hours during the day were chosen when they were free. The first person interviewed was asked not to discuss the topic with the spouse who had not yet been interviewed. When both wife and husband were at home at the same time, they were interviewed separately by two interviewers. Thus every effort was made to prevent one spouse from influencing responses of the other.

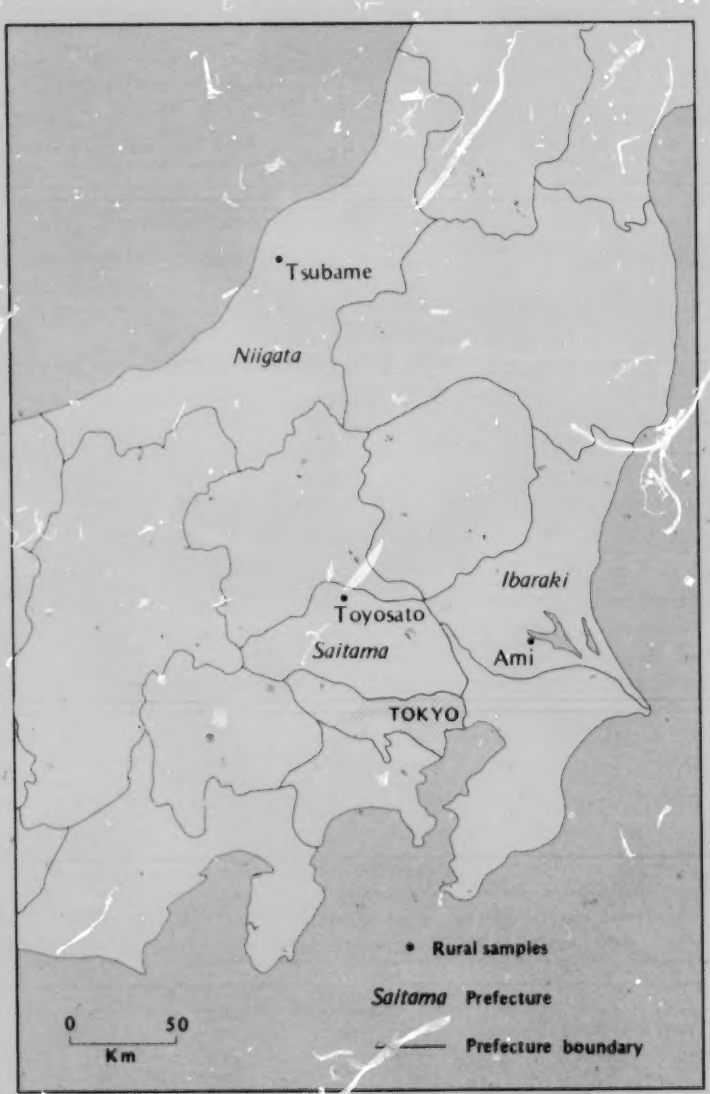
The sample

Husbands and wives having at least one child were chosen as respondents for the study. Age of respondents ranged from 20 to 34 for wives and from 20 to 44 for husbands. The sample for each country included about 360 respondents, with 60 couples (120 respondents) from each of three socioeconomic groups: urban middle-class, urban lower-class, and rural. Comparable socioeconomic groups were selected in all six countries of the study to test the hypothesis that more affluent and particularly more urbanized respondents would manifest more modern attitudes toward children and fertility than less affluent and less urbanized respondents. Thus no attempt was made at this stage of the study to select a sample that would be statistically representative of Japan's population.

The following sampling procedures were followed in Japan. For the sample of agricultural households,[1] rural areas far from cities had to be selected. On the advice of statisticians in the Statistical Division of the Ministry of Health and Welfare, we selected three prefectures: Niigata (situated about 250 kilometers north of Tokyo on the Sea of Japan), Ibaraki (about 100 kilometers northeast of Tokyo), and Saitama (about 70 kilometers north of Tokyo). The population of the first of these prefectures is engaged mainly in rice agriculture, the second has about half rice and half dry-field agriculture, and the third has mainly dry-field agriculture. Within each prefecture, one or two villages were chosen on the advice of local health personnel. The villages were Koike and Kodaka near the city of Tsubame in Niigata Prefecture; Ami village, in the county of Inashiki, Ibaraki Prefecture; and Toyosato village, in Ohsato County, Saitama Prefecture. (See Figure 2.1 for the sample areas.) In each village, eligible respondents

1 Owing to Japan's high level of urbanization, finding purely agricultural households proved to be difficult, because many farmers operate businesses in addition to their farms. Such households were avoided in order to obtain a purely agricultural sample.

Figure 2.1 Locations of rural sample: Japan



were selected from household registers. About 50 households were selected from each prefecture, totalling 142 households. From an average of 50 households, we aimed at obtaining 20 completed interviews with couples in each of the three areas. After households were selected, two letters were sent requesting cooperation from the prospective respondents, one from the VOC project staff and the other from the Family Planning Federation of Japan. The interviewers then visited the households three to five days after the letters were sent. In the interim, the local health center telephoned the household to make appointments for the interviews. Through this procedure, actual interviews were completed with 66 couples (Table 2.1). In addition, there were ten cases (one husband and nine wives) in which the spouse could not be interviewed. Such cases are included in the aggregate analyses of husbands and wives in this report.

Metropolitan Tokyo was chosen for the urban sample. Of the 23 old city quarters, we randomly selected 12. Within each of these, we chose 50 households from voter registration lists, taking households successively after a random start. The aim was to obtain completed interviews from 12 couples among the 50 households, for a total of 144 couples in the 12 quarters. No socioeconomic criteria were employed in selecting the sample, but interviewers were instructed to skip any households that were obviously of the upper class. Interviews were completed with 119 couples, plus 15 husbands and 17 wives whose spouses were not interviewed (Table 2.2).

Since adequate criteria for judging the socioeconomic status of respondents prior to the interview did not exist, we classified respondents as middle-class or lower-class after the interviews were completed, during the analysis phase. This determination was based on the following criteria:

1. We asked respondents to identify their general income range. The

Table 2.1 Distribution of respondents by location: rural sample

Prefecture	Both spouses interviewed (number of couples)	One spouse interviewed	
		Husband	Wife
Niigata	19	0	1
Ibaraki	22	0	5
Saitama	25	1	3
Total	66	1	9

Table 2.2 Distribution of respondents by location: urban sample

Ward	Both spouses interviewed (number of couples)	One spouse interviewed	
		Husband	Wife
Chuo-ku	10	0	0
Shinjuku-ku	11	0	1
Koto-ku	11	0	1
Shinjuku-ku	12	0	0
Ota-ku	11	1	0
Setagaya-ku	6	5	4
Nakano-ku	10	1	1
Suginami-ku	8	2	4
Arakawa-ku	11	0	1
Nerima-ku	10	2	2
Katsushika-ku	6	3	2
Edogawa-ku	13	1	1
Total	119	15	17

cutoff point was at 1,500,000 yen (approximately US$5,000 at the time of the interviews). Those who checked this amount or the columns below it were classified in the lower income group; those who checked the columns above this amount were classified in the middle income group.

2. A further criterion was ownership of an automobile. Owners were considered middle-class; nonowners, lower-class.
3. The third reference was status of residence. Those who owned their homes were regarded as middle-class; those who rented were classified as lower-class.
4. The last criterion was husband's type of occupation. Those engaged in professional, technical, and managerial work were classified as middle-class; husbands engaged in all other occupations were classified as lower-class.

By combining these four criteria, we were able to divide the urban sample into two socioeconomic groups comprising 136 middle-class respondents and 134 lower-class respondents.

Profile of respondents

Nearly a third of the respondents were in the age group of 25–29 and about 44 percent were between the ages of 30–34 at the time of the interviews (Table 2.3). Nearly half of the wives were under age 30,

Table 2.3 Ages of respondents, by socioeconomic group and sex

Age group	Urban middle		Urban lower		Rural		Female		Male		All respondents	
Under 20	1	(0.7)	0	(0.0)	0	(0.0)	0	(0.0)	1	(0.5)	1	(0.2)
20–24	2	(1.5)	15	(11.2)	2	(1.4)	15	(7.1)	4	(2.0)	19	(4.6)
25–29	34	(25.0)	47	(35.1)	47	(33.1)	84	(39.8)	44	(21.9)	128	(31.1)
30–34	59	(43.4)	54	(40.3)	66	(46.5)	102	(48.4)	77	(38.3)	179	(43.5)
35–39	35	(25.7)	14	(10.4)	27	(19.0)	10	(4.7)	66	(32.8)	76	(18.4)
40–45	5	(3.7)	4	(3.0)	0	(0.0)	0	(0.0)	9	(4.5)	9	(2.2)
All age groups	136	(100.0)	134	(100.0)	142	(100.0)	211	(100.0)	201	(100.0)	412	(100.0)

NOTE: Percentage of sample is given in parentheses.

compared with one-fourth of the husbands. Urban middle-class respondents were somewhat older, on the average, than rural or urban lower-class respondents.

Monthly incomes among urban middle-class respondents ranged from 150,000 (US$495 at the 1972 conversion rate) to more than 300,000 (US$990) yen (Table 2.4). For the urban lower class, a monthly income range of 100,000 to 149,000 yen predominated. In the rural group, a wider and more evenly distributed range was observed.

Table 2.4 Monthly incomes of respondents
(Percentage of respondents)

Monthly income (thousand yen)[a]	Urban middle	Urban lower	Rural	All SES groups
Under 50	0.0	0.0	1.4	0.5
50–99	0.0	7.5	12.0	6.6
100–149	0.0	76.1	17.6	30.8
150–199	36.8	14.2	23.9	25.0
200–249	22.8	0.7	12.7	12.1
250–300	10.3	0.0	11.3	7.3
Above 300	29.4	0.0	9.2	12.9
No response	0.7	1.5	12.0	4.9
Total	100.0	100.0	100.1	100.1

NOTE: Percentages may not sum to 100 because of rounding.

a 100 yen was equivalent to about US$0.33 at the time of the interviews.

With regard to educational achievement, many of the urban lower-class and rural respondents had only the lower secondary (compulsory) level of education (Table 2.5). Roughly half of the respondents in each social class were educated at the high school (upper secondary) level. But whereas respondents with university education were fairly common in the two urban groups, especially among husbands, in the rural group this proportion was markedly small: 4.5 and 1.3 percent of male and female respondents, respectively.

Table 2.6 shows the occupational distribution of respondents. About 15 percent of the total were engaged in some kind of professional, technical, or managerial work. About 41 percent were clerical, sales, and service workers or craftsmen. About 18 percent were farmers

Table 2.5 Education of respondents
(Percentage of respondents at specified educational level)

Education	Urban middle	Urban lower	Rural
Wives			
Junior high school (8–9 years)	25.4	40.6	49.3
High school (10–12 years)	52.3	47.8	49.3
University (13–16 years)	22.4	11.5	1.3
Total	100.1	99.9	99.9
Husbands			
Junior high school (8–9 years)	15.9	32.3	46.3
High school (10–12 years)	43.4	44.6	47.8
University (13–16 years)	40.6	23.1	4.5
No response	0.0	0.0	1.5
Total	99.9	100.0	100.1

NOTE: Percentages may not sum to 100 because of rounding.

or farm managers. The distributions vary in expected ways by SES group. Although a majority of the wives held jobs outside the home, 39 percent were unemployed.

Over half (57 percent) of the sample was Buddhist, according to the respondents' own classification (Table 2.7). Twenty-seven percent had adopted no religion, and 16 percent had adopted a religion other than Buddhism. According to other data not shown in Table 2.7, however, 88 percent of the respondents actually held no strong religious beliefs, whereas 6 percent belonged to some Buddhist sect and 5 percent belonged to a new religion.

The mean number of living children our respondents had was 1.9. The mean number of children in the urban middle-class and rural groups was 2.02 and 2.04, respectively, whereas it was 1.58 in the urban lower-class group. Some 6.9 percent of the female respondents had had miscarriages, and about 0.5 percent had had stillbirths. We calculated that the abortion rate was about 13.2 percent. Over 70 percent of respondents had practiced some kind of contraception. These data and other findings related to fertility and fertility control are discussed in detail in Chapter 5.

In summary, it may be noted that the sample in Japan was more homogeneous than the samples in other countries in the VOC study, especially with respect to socioeconomic status. The rural group had

Table 2.6 Occupation of respondents
(Percentage of respondents)

Occupation	Urban middle	Urban lower	Rural	Female	Male	All respondents
Professional, technical, kindred workers	10.3	3.7	1.4	2.8	7.5	5.1
Managers, officials, proprietors (except farm)	21.3	6.7	2.8	3.3	17.4	10.2
Sales workers	5.9	5.2	2.1	5.2	3.5	4.4
Craftsmen, foremen, kindred workers	10.3	15.7	7.0	9.5	12.4	10.9
Clerical and kindred workers	16.9	23.1	7.7	13.3	18.4	15.8
Operatives and kindred workers	3.7	10.4	2.8	1.9	9.5	5.6
Service workers (except private household)	5.9	7.5	0.0	4.7	4.0	4.4
Farmers and farm managers	0.0	0.0	52.8	12.3	24.4	18.2
Laborers (except farm)	2.9	6.7	0.7	4.3	2.5	3.4
Other unclassifiable	0.7	2.2	0.0	1.9	0.0	1.0
Unemployed	19.9	17.9	22.5	38.9	0.5	20.1
No response	2.2	0.7	0.0	1.9	0.0	1.0
Total	100.0	99.8	99.8	100.0	100.1	100.1

NOTE: Percentages may not sum to 100 because of rounding.

Table 2.7 Religion of respondents
(Percentage of respondents)

Religion	Urban middle	Urban lower	Rural	Female	Male	All respondents
Buddhism	55.1	38.8	74.6	51.7	61.7	56.6
Other religion	17.7	19.4	11.3	15.1	16.9	16.0
No religion	27.2	41.8	14.1	33.2	21.4	27.4
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

a mean of 10.6 years of education, for example, compared with 12.3 years for the urban middle-class, and most of the rural respondents had relatively high levels of income. Differences in fertility across groups were also slight, with the rural group having essentially the same family size (two children) as the urban middle class, despite a longer duration of marriage (8.2 years compared with 7.2 years). This homogeneity of the Japanese sample suggests that differences across groups in motivational patterns may be less striking than in other countries. As shown in the following chapters, however, some important differences were found, apparently reflecting situational factors and the extent to which modern value orientations have been adopted within various social groups.

3

advantages and disadvantages of children

This chapter describes major findings concerning general and specific values of children obtained from respondents' answers to questions about reasons for wanting and not wanting children. The first section summarizes responses to open-ended questions about the advantages and disadvantages of having childen as compared with not having children, and respondents' reasons for wanting or not wanting children under stipulated conditions. Next are described results obtained from structured items consisting of reasons for wanting and not wanting another child. A third section presents the results of a Likert-type attitude scale expressing positive and negative opinions about children and parenthood. The final section discusses similarities and differences of the results obtained from the three methodologies.

Open-ended questions

One major aspect of this study is its heavy reliance on respondents' unstructured, descriptive answers to the questions regarding the advantages and disadvantages of having children. To learn how respondents conceptualized their values, it was necessary to ask open-ended questions about this topic. Such questions appeared in several places in the questionnaire, notably toward the beginning. Six questions asked about advantages; four asked about disadvantages. Respondents' verbatim responses to each question were coded independently by several coders using predetermined coding categories. Most of the 60 coding

categories for advantages and 30 categories for disadvantages were used in all six VOC countries; a few were added for country-specific responses in Japan. General and specific coding categories are listed in Exhibit 3.1.

Advantages of having children

Open-ended questions asked about the advantages of having children in four contexts. The first concerned the advantages of having children as compared with having no children. Respondents were asked to describe as many advantages as they could think of and then to rank the most important and next most important items. The second question concerned respondents' perceptions of why others in the community wanted children. The third asked about the advantages of having a specific number of children, and the fourth asked about the advantages of having children of a particular sex.

General advantages

Among the first questions respondents were asked was the following: "I would like to know what you think are some of the good things or advantages about having children, *compared with not having children at all.* These might include the pleasure and benefits you get from having children now and those that you expect in the future. What would you say are some of the good things or advantages about having children, compared with not having children?" Table 3.1 summarizes the responses, which were coded into eight general categories. The most frequently mentioned advantage was the happiness, love, and companionship offered by children; less salient were childrearing satisfactions, personal development of parent, benefits to the family unit, economic benefits and security, kin group benefits, and social or religious influences.

Happiness, love, and companionship were almost equally salient to the three SES groups. The rural group, however, cited childrearing satisfactions more frequently than the two urban groups, whereas the two urban groups mentioned benefits to the family unit and personal development of the parent more frequently than the rural group. Another interesting finding is that economic benefits and security and kin group benefits were mentioned more frequently by rural than by urban respondents. Tradition and security associated with children were apparently salient values to the rural group, although emotional benefits were much more salient.

Wives mentioned more frequently than husbands personal develop-

Exhibit 3.1 Advantages and disadvantages of having children: major and specific code categories derived from content analysis of responses

ADVANTAGES

Happiness, love, companionship

Companionship, avoidance of loneliness
Love, affection
Play, fun with children; avoidance of boredom
Relief from strain, distraction from problems
Happiness for individual parent (general)
Happiness for family
Uniqueness, specialness in parent-child relationship

Personal development of parent

Character development, responsibility, maturity, morality
Incentives to succeed, striving to provide for children
Fulfillment of self, completeness as person
Extension of self
Learning from experience of childrearing
Motherhood, fatherhood; adulthood

Childrearing satisfactions

Pride in children's accomplishments
Children to carry out parent's hopes, aspirations
Opportunity to teach, guide, instill values
Satisfaction in one's childrearing ability, accomplishments
Satisfaction in providing for children

Economic benefits, security

Economic help in old age
Companionship, comfort, care in old age
Unspecified help in old age

Economic benefits, security *(continued)*

Economic help (old age not mentioned)
Comfort, care (old age not mentioned)
Help in housework, family chores; practical help
Help in family business, farm
Help in taking care of other children
Unspecified help (old age not mentioned)

Benefits to family unit

Children as bond between spouses
Children as family life; complete, closeknit family

Kin group benefits

Continuity of family name
To increase strength, power of kin group
To satisfy desires of other kin

Social, religious influences

Conformity to social norms
Children as benefits to society

General, intrinsic value of children

Children as treasure, wealth, assets
Instinctive, natural to have children
General wanting, liking children

Country-specific advantages

Children as prime value in life, source of encouragement and liveliness
To preserve one's youthfulness
Personality formation of other siblings

Exhibit 3.1 *(continued)*

DISADVANTAGES

Financial costs

Educational costs
General financial costs

Emotional costs

Responsibility of parenthood
Discipline, moral behavior
Health problems of children
Concern over children's future success, happiness
Concern about satisfying children's present wants
Noise, disorder, nuisance
General rearing problems
General emotional strain

Physical demands on parents

Health hazard of pregnancy; maternal health
Physical work, tiredness caused by children

Restrictions on alternative activities

Restrictions on time
Restrictions on travel
Restrictions on social life, recreation
Restrictions on job, career
Restrictions on personal wants
Restrictions on privacy
General lack of flexibility, freedom

Marital problems

Less time, interaction between spouses
Disagreements over children

Country-specific disadvantages

Deterioration of childrearing environment; pollution and accidents
Housing problems
Schooling problems
Economic and material aspects of social security inadequate for childrearing
Concern over age differences between children, age balance
Dislike of children
More children a cause of more associations and possible trouble with neighbors and relatives
Futility of raising children; no security to parents in old age

Table 3.1 General advantages of having children
(Percentage of respondents who mentioned specified advantage categories)

General advantage	Urban middle	Urban lower	Rural	Female	Male	All respondents
Happiness, love, companionship	61	69	63	66	63	64
Childrearing satisfactions	37	36	46	38	41	40
Benefits to family unit	28	35	14	28	23	26
Parent's personal development	29	21	17	26	18	22
Economic benefits, security	7	9	19	14	9	12
Kin group benefits	3	4	11	3	9	6
Social, religious influences	4	1	1	1	2	2
General, intrinsic value of children	1	2	3	1	3	2

ment of the parent and the economic benefits and security that children provide, but husbands mentioned childrearing satisfactions and kin group benefits slightly more frequently. These results are reasonable in the sense that mothers learn more about themselves through their direct contact with children in the course of raising them. Wives were also more likely than husbands to anticipate needing economic support from their children because fewer wives were in the labor force. Male respondents may have regarded their children as extensions of themselves and put more stress than women on the kin group benefits of children since in Japan children take the father's surname.

Breaking these frequencies into specific categories produced the results shown in Table 3.2. Happiness for the family was the most frequently mentioned specific advantage of children for the sample at large. Next was children as a source of encouragement and liveliness,[1] followed by pleasure from growth and development of children, chil-

1 This item was one of the country-specific categories, the original word given by respondents being *ikigai*. It is literally translated "enjoyment of life" through sustained work. While there are similar English expressions, such as "goals and incentives from children" and "parenthood satisfactions," no identical expression is found in English. *Ikigai* is a culturally loaded word that for the Japanese has a direct experiential appeal within the context of strenuous Japanese life.

Table 3.2 Specific advantages of having children
(Percentage of respondents who mentioned specified advantage categories)

Specific advantage	Urban middle	Urban lower	Rural	Female	Male	All respondents
Happiness for family	41	49	46	47	47	46
Prime value in life	35	41	42	38	39	39
Pleasure from growth and development of children	24	19	22	24	19	22
Children as bond between spouses	22	27	10	21	18	19
Children to carry out parent's hopes, aspirations	14	14	23	14	19	17
Companionship, avoidance of loneliness	11	14	12	10	15	12
Children as family life, complete or close-knit family	10	16	7	12	19	11
Happiness for individual parent (general)	10	11	10	15	5	10
Satisfaction in providing for children	10	5	11	8	9	9
Character development, responsibility, maturity, morality	12	7	3	6	9	7

dren as a bond between husband and wife, and children to carry out the parent's hopes and aspirations. Less frequently mentioned were companionship, avoidance of loneliness; children as family life, complete or close-knit family; happiness for individual parent; satisfaction in providing for children; and character development or responsibility, maturity, morality.

Urban respondents mentioned more often than rural respondents the advantages of children as a bond between spouses and as a source of family life. The middle-class group mentioned more than other groups character development or responsibility, maturity, morality; the rural group was most inclined to mention children to carry out parent's hopes and aspirations. The lower-class group least frequently mentioned satisfaction in providing for children and pleasure from children's growth and development, but it mentioned happiness for

the family, children as a bond between spouses, and children as family life more frequently than the other two SES groups.

More female than male respondents mentioned pleasure from children's growth and development and the happiness that children bring the individual parent. For male respondents, children to carry out parent's hopes and aspirations, companionship or avoidance of loneliness, children as family life, and children to complete the family were relatively more salient.

After naming all the advantages of children they could think of, respondents were asked to rank them in order of importance. The results are presented in Table 3.3. For the sample as a whole, happiness for the family and children as a prime value in life far outweighed the other advantages. Ranking by importance and by frequency of mention (salience) roughly correspond except that companionship/avoidance of loneliness, which ranked sixth in salience, ranked eighth in importance.

Table 3.3 Most important advantages of having children
(Percentage of respondents who ranked specified advantage categories first in importance)

Advantage	Urban middle	Urban lower	Rural	Female	Male	All respondents
Happiness for family	20	29	21	24	22	23
Prime value in life	19	19	26	23	20	21
Pleasure from growth and development of children	10	4	6	8	6	7
Children as bond between spouses	8	5	1	6	4	5
Children to carry out parent's hopes, aspirations	3	5	6	2	7	5
Children as family life, complete or close-knit family	3	8	2	3	5	4
Happiness for individual parent (general)	2	4	3	3	2	3
Companionship, avoidance of loneliness	3	3	3	2	3	3
Satisfaction in providing for children	6	1	2	2	3	3
Character development, responsibility, maturity, morality	4	2	1	2	3	3

Regarding subgroup differences, the following points should be noted. First, prime value in life was more important to the rural group than to the two urban groups. Second, pleasure from children's growth and development, children as a bond between spouses, satisfaction in providing for children, and character development were somewhat more important to the middle-class group than to the other SES groups. Third, the lower-class group placed more importance than the others on happiness for the family and children as family life. And fourth, more male than female respondents ranked as most important children to carry out parent's hopes and aspirations and children as family life, whereas more women than men gave first ranking to happiness for the family, prime value in life, pleasure from growth, and children as a bond between spouses.

One can conclude from these spontaneous responses to questions about the general advantages of children that for Japanese respondents the dominant value dimensions associated with children were psychological-affective: happiness for the family, the experience of child-rearing (pleasure from growth and development, children to carry out parent's hopes), and benefits to the family unit (affection bonds, children as family life).

Why people in the community want children

A projective open-ended question probed respondents' perceptions of others' childbearing motivations: "In your opinion, what are the main reasons why people around here want children?" Nearly a fifth of the respondents mentioned happiness for the family and having children as heirs (Table 3.4). Mentioned with slightly less frequency was prime value in life. Some respondents were unable to hazard a reason, while one in ten indicated that most people have an instinctive, "natural," or general desire for children—a response that did not appear in the question about advantages of children. Two other reasons that were not mentioned when respondents talked about their own motivations were conformity to social pressures and a desire to continue the family name, although neither was mentioned with much frequency.

Rural respondents and men emphasized the kin group benefit of having children as heirs. These respondents seemed to subscribe to the traditional view that children are needed to inherit the family wealth and to satisfy desires of the kin group. The lower-class and rural groups mentioned happiness for the family somewhat more frequently than the middle class. Prime value in life was mentioned most frequently by the rural group and women. The lower-class group had the

Table 3.4 Perceived reasons why people in the community want children
(Percentage of respondents who mentioned specified reasons)

Reason	Urban middle	Urban lower	Rural	Female	Male	All respondents
Happiness for family	16	21	22	17	17	19
To have heirs	14	10	32	14	20	18
Prime value in life	15	10	22	17	9	15
Having children is instinctive, natural	14	13	3	10	9	10
No reason given/don't know	7	15	6	8	10	9
General desire for children	9	15	4	8	9	9
Companionship	10	7	11	10	7	9
Children as family life	14	5	2	6	8	7
Conformity to social norms	2	7	5	3	7	5
Children as bond between spouses	8	5	3	4	7	5
Continuity of family name	4	3	6	3	6	4

NOTE: Only the first two reasons mentioned by each respondent were included in analysis.

highest frequency of "general wanting" and "don't know" responses, but slightly more middle-class than lower-class respondents mentioned "instinctive" or "natural" behavior; in contrast, few rural respondents gave these answers. Slightly more lower-class and rural than middle-class respondents mentioned pronatalist social pressures.

Advantages of having a specified number of children

Respondents were asked how many children they wished to have and why they would not want fewer than that number. The assumption was that fewer would be viewed as disadvantageous. The results are shown in Table 3.5. A desire to provide companionship for other children was the predominant reason, mentioned by about a third of the respondents in each subgroup. This response suggests that the desired number of children was not considered of value to the parents themselves but rather to their existing children. Another salient advantage, especially to lower-class and female respondents, was to foster the

Table 3.5 Reasons for not wanting fewer than desired number of children
(Percentage of respondents who gave specified reasons)

Reason	Urban middle	Urban lower	Rural	Female	Male	All respondents
Companionship for other children	30	36	36	36	34	35
To foster character development of children	30	51	10	49	29	33
Good number to have, want that number	23	15	12	16	17	16
To avoid having an only child	12	15	9	14	12	13
Anxiety over infant mortality	7	5	28	14	13	13
Companionship, avoidance of loneliness	11	5	9	10	6	8
Happiness for family	12	1	5	3	8	6
Want more boys	4	5	9	5	7	6
Want certain combination of boys and girls, balance	5	3	7	7	2	4
Want more girls	9	1	3	8	1	4

character development of children already born. The other reasons were to avoid having an only child ("an only child would be lonesome"), fear that existing children might die, a desire for companionship or happiness for the family, and the desire for a particular combination of boys and girls, for children of both sexes, or for more children of one sex or the other. Some respondents (16 percent) gave a tautological response, saying that the number they desired was a "good" number to have, or that they simply wanted that number.

The middle-class group gave the response "good number to have" and cited companionship, happiness for the family, and a desire for more girls more frequently than the other groups. Avoiding an only child was more salient to the two urban groups than to rural respondents, whereas anxiety over infant mortality was mentioned mostly by rural respondents.

In addition to concern about the character development of their children, female respondents gave relatively more emphasis than males to companionship and avoidance of loneliness, desire for a certain

combination of sons and daughters, and desire for more girls. Male respondents gave relatively more emphasis to happiness for the family and desire for more boys.

Reasons for wanting children of a particular sex

As the reasons given for wanting a particular number of children reveal, parents' motives for wanting children are often related to sex preferences. A parent may want girls because of their personality traits, for example, or because there are no girls in the family. VOC respondents were asked whether it was important to have at least one daughter or one son and, if so, why it was important. Their reasons are summarized in Tables 3.6 and 3.7.

The three most salient reasons for wanting girls were to provide companionship for the mother, the behavior or personality of girls, and expected help with housework and family chores. Differences among the subgroups in some cases were substantial, however. The middle-class group mentioned most frequently the behavior or person-

Table 3.6 Reasons for wanting a daughter
(Percentage of respondents who mentioned specified reasons)

Reason	Urban middle	Urban lower	Rural	Female	Male	All respondents
Companionship, closeness with mother	42	54	41	62	13	42
Desirable behavior or personality of girls	48	40	34	25	41	38
Help in housework, family chores	14	18	30	18	17	19
Parent's preferred sex ratio	11	6	5	1	12	7
Mixture of sexes for benefit of children	14	4	4	2	11	7
Satisfaction in providing for children	5	4	8	4	6	5
Companionship, comfort, care in old age	3	7	7	8	2	5
Happiness for family	6	2	5	1	8	4
Children to carry out parent's aspirations	2	1	2	2	2	2
Unspecified help in old age	0	0	4	1	1	1

ality of girls, followed by companionship for the mother, help with housework, a mixture of sexes for the children's benefit, and the parent's preferred sex ratio. The lower-class group most frequently mentioned companionship for the mother, followed by the behavior or personality of girls and help in housework. Similarly, for the rural group the most salient reasons, in order, were companionship for the mother, girls' personality traits, and help in housework. Women mentioned much more frequently than men the companionship of girls, their closeness to the mother, and the comfort that daughters provide. Men, on the other hand, gave relatively more stress to the personality traits of girls, wanting girls to achieve their desired sex ratio, having a mixture of sexes for the benefit of the children, and happiness for the family. Of interest are the negligible percentages of respondents who mentioned help in old age even among the rural group.

The main reasons given for wanting boys (Table 3.7), in order of salience, were to have heirs, the behavior or personality traits of boys, companionship for the father, unspecified help from sons (old age not

Table 3.7 Reasons for wanting a son
(Percentage of respondents who mentioned specified reasons)

Reason	Urban middle	Urban lower	Rural	Female	Male	All respondents
To have heirs	27	19	64	34	36	36
Desirable behavior or personality of boys	29	53	18	28	26	31
Companionship, closeness with father	23	32	10	11	24	20
Unspecified help (old age not mentioned)	3	15	7	9	4	8
Continuity of family name	12	6	5	8	6	7
Parent's preferred sex ratio	9	3	4	6	4	5
Help in old age	5	2	8	7	4	5
Children to carry out parent's aspirations	1	8	6	2	6	5
Help in family business	2	2	5	3	3	3
Mixture of sexes for benefit of children	4	3	2	3	3	3

mentioned), and continuity of the family name. (To have heirs was not among the first ten most frequently cited reasons for wanting girls.) Many more rural than urban respondents mentioned this reason for wanting sons. Like girls, boys were desired for their behavioral traits by substantial percentages of all subgroups.

But differences among subgroups are noteworthy. The lower-class group mentioned the behavior or personality of boys much more frequently than middle-class or rural respondents. Companionship for the father was most salient to the lower-class group and men, least salient to rural respondents. Unspecified help for parents was mentioned by more lower-class and female respondents than others, whereas help in old age was relatively more salient to rural and female respondents than to the other groups (though the percentage of respondents mentioning this reason was small). More middle-class respondents than others mentioned continuity of family name. Children to carry out parent's hopes and aspirations predominated as a reason among lower-class, rural, and male groups.

In summary, respondents expressed somewhat different motivations for wanting girls and wanting boys. For girls, the reasons tended to be related to psychological rewards such as companionship for the mother and the behavior or personality of girls. In addition, girls' contribution to housework and family chores was a salient motivation. For boys, practical reasons were prominent: boys can be heirs, can continue the family name, and may help their parents both as children and later as adults. The personality of boys and the companionship they provide, especially to the father, were also salient reasons for wanting sons.

Disadvantages of having children

General disadvantages

As with advantages, respondents were asked an open-ended question about the disadvantages of having children: "Now I would like to know about some of the difficulties or disadvantages connected with having children *compared with not having children at all.* These might include, for instance, various problems or stresses related to raising children, or things that you cannot do or have to give up because you have children. What would you say are some of the difficulties or disadvantages connected with having children, compared with not having children?" Their responses, along with those of VOC respondents in other countries, were content-analyzed and coded into general and specific disadvantage categories (Exhibit 3.1). The general disadvantages as perceived by the Japanese sample are shown in Table 3.8.

Table 3.8 General disadvantages of having children
(Percentage of respondents who mentioned specified disadvantage categories)

General disadvantages	Urban middle	Urban lower	Rural	Female	Male	All respondents
Restrictions on alternative activities	57	54	33	56	40	48
Emotional costs	38	49	45	49	38	44
Financial costs	23	20	24	19	26	23
Physical demands on parents	6	9	5	9	5	7
Marital problems	12	2	3	5	6	6
Kin group costs, problems of inheritance	0	0	1	1	*	*
Societal costs, overpopulation	0	0	1	1	*	*
Other disadvantages	0	0	2	1	1	1

* Less than 1 percent.

The dominant categories for the sample as a whole were, in order of salience, restrictions on alternative activities, emotional costs, and financial costs. Somewhat less salient were physical demands on parents and marital problems caused by children. Fewer than 1 percent of the respondents mentioned societal costs such as overpopulation, but this may have been due to the way the question was phrased.

Subgroup differences are of interest. Urban respondents and women in particular felt the restrictions on their alternative activities, over half of these groups mentioning this disadvantage. The urban lower-class, rural, and female groups mentioned emotional costs of children somewhat more frequently than the other groups. For financial costs, the third category, differences among SES groups were minor, but somewhat more husbands than wives mentioned this disadvantage. As expected, physical demands on parents were more salient to women than to men; physical demands were also more salient to lower-class respondents than to the other SES groups. Marital problems were mentioned by more middle-class respondents than others.

The frequent mention by urban respondents of restrictions on alternative activities may be taken to mean that urban life exposes people to many activities as they adapt to rapid changes in their daily environment, whereas rural life remains slow and monotonous. Thus

children become a hindrance to parents engaged in these alternative activities in the city but do not seriously disturb a quiet rural life.

The frequent mention of emotional strain by the urban lower-class and rural groups implies that they suffer from physical and psychological burdens caused by their unsatisfactory surroundings. The financial costs of children mentioned especially by the middle-class and rural groups may signify their greater sacrifice in raising children at the expense of their standard of living.

The physical demands mentioned in particular by the lower-class group probably include travel to a distant job, shortage of nursery schools, and the like. Middle-class couples could probably afford to leave their children in nursery schools, and rural couples were probably able to rely on grandparents for childcare. The difference between female and male respondents in the salience of physical demands of children on parents may be explained by the fact that mothers usually have responsibility for the physical rearing of children, whereas fathers usually have financial responsibility for the family's support.

The relatively high frequency with which middle-class respondents mentioned marital problems suggests that because of the busy activities of each spouse, the marital bond may be weakened by having children.

When the major disadvantage categories shown in Table 3.8 are broken down into specific disadvantages, the results shown in Table 3.9 are obtained. The specific disadvantage mentioned by the greatest proportion (a fourth) of respondents was restrictions on time, followed by general financial costs. Health problems of children were also salient to the sample as a whole. Mentioned less frequently but by at least a tenth of all respondents were the general emotional strain caused by children; noise, disorder, and nuisance; restrictions on the parent's job or career; general lack of flexibility and freedom; and restrictions on social life.

Restrictions on time, lack of flexibility and freedom, and restrictions on personal wants were mentioned more frequently by the two urban groups than by the rural group. Apparently urban life requires more alternative activities in adapting to daily life than does a rural existence, and therefore rearing children becomes much more of a burden and more time-consuming for urban parents. A further difference between urban and rural respondents is found in the salience of health problems. Rural parents tended to worry more about the health of their children than urban parents, probably because of their relative lack of knowledge about health care and shortages of medical services in rural areas. Noise, disorder, and nuisance caused by children were

Table 3.9 Specific disadvantages of having children
(Percentage of respondents who mentioned specified disadvantage categories)

Specific disadvantage	Urban middle	Urban lower	Rural	Female	Male	All respondents
Restrictions on time	27	29	16	29	17	24
General financial costs	21	21	22	18	23	21
Health problems of children	15	19	23	19	18	19
General emotional strain	16	13	13	16	11	14
Noise, disorder, nuisance	9	13	13	13	10	12
Restrictions on job, career	10	13	12	13	9	11
General lack of flexibility, freedom	12	13	9	12	9	11
Restrictions on social life, recreation	13	8	8	11	10	10
Restrictions on personal wants	10	9	6	11	5	8
General rearing problems	3	12	8	8	6	7

more frequently mentioned by the urban lower-class and rural groups, probably because of their lack of a suitable childrearing environment. Restrictions on social life were more salient to the middle class than to the other two SES groups, whereas general childrearing problems were least salient to this group, probably because of the abundant information and resources available to them. All SES groups mentioned the financial costs of children with nearly equal frequency.

With regard to differences between the sexes, more women than men mentioned restrictions on their time (29 percent as against 17 percent), the general emotional strain of having children, restrictions on their jobs and careers, lack of flexibility and freedom, and restrictions on personal wants. More men than women mentioned financial costs of children (23 percent, compared with 18 percent). These responses are understandable. Women usually take the chief responsibility for rearing children, whereas men have primary financial responsibility for supporting the family.

When respondents ranked specific disadvantages according to importance, restrictions on time and health problems of children were predominant (Table 3.10).[2] Urban respondents were more likely to

2 A similar finding was obtained from a country-specific question about fears and anxieties associated with childrearing (see Appendix, p. 104). Using a five-

Table 3.10 Most important disadvantages of having children
(Percentage of respondents who ranked specified advantage categories first in importance)

Disadvantage	Urban middle	Urban lower	Rural	Female	Male	All respondents
Restrictions on time	14	19	8	19	7	14
Health problems of children	10	13	15	13	12	13
General financial costs	7	7	8	5	9	7
General emotional strain	7	6	4	7	4	6
General lack of flexibility and freedom	9	8	1	6	5	6
Restrictions on job, career	5	5	6	7	4	5
Restrictions on social life	6	5	1	6	2	4
Noise, disorder, nuisance	2	6	4	2	4	4
Restrictions on personal wants	4	4	3	3	3	3
General rearing problems	1	5	4	3	3	3

cite restrictions on their time as most important, and more women than men gave first ranking to this category. Across all subgroups, health problems of children ranked second. The two urban groups cited general lack of flexibility and freedom much more often than the rural group. Restrictions on social life were ranked first by more urban and female respondents than others, whereas noise, disorder, and nuisance were cited in particular by the lower-class, rural, and male groups.

Disadvantages of having more than desired number of children

Respondents who wanted more children were asked why they would not want more than the number given as their desired family size. As Table 3.11 shows, the financial burden of additional children was the major reason, mentioned by a fourth of all respondents. To raise another child would pose a financial problem for these Japanese couples. The urban lower-class group perceived this problem more keenly than

point scale to rate eight items selected as the source of parents' anxiety, 54 percent of the urban and 33 percent of the rural respondents rated health problems of children as causing great anxiety. Receiving the highest rating, however, was fear of accidents. The cost of raising children was rated fifth or sixth in anxiety level. The discrepancy between these results and the present findings may be due to differences in conceptual focus and methodology.

Table 3.11 Reasons for not wanting more than desired number of children
(Percentage of respondents who gave specified reasons)

Reason	Urban middle	Urban lower	Rural	Female	Male	All respondents
General financial burden	23	31	23	20	30	25
General rearing problems	5	5	9	6	7	6
Housing problems	5	10	1	6	5	5
Responsibility of parenthood	5	4	1	3	4	3
Health hazard of pregnancy; maternal health	4	2	3	5	1	3
Already have number of children wanted	0	5	5	4	2	3
Spouse doesn't want more children	2	1	3	1	2	2
To have correct number for childrearing, ease of handling, happiness	0	4	1	2	2	2
Educational costs	1	1	3	2	1	2
Physical demands	4	1	0	2	1	2

other groups, as did male respondents, who were chiefly responsible for financial support. Other reasons, mentioned by much smaller percentages of respondents, were general rearing problems, housing problems, the responsibility of parenthood, and concern about the mother's health. Concern about the housing problem was peculiar to Japanese respondents. The urban lower-class group mentioned this category more frequently than other groups, a finding that may reflect the crowded urban housing conditions in present-day Japan. Female respondents were particularly concerned about the hazards of another pregnancy and their own health.

Reasons for not wanting more children

Respondents who said they did not want more children were asked why not. As Table 3.12 shows, the financial burden again predominated. The second most common "reason" was that the respondent already had the number wanted, a response that provides no useful information; then came concern about pregnancy and maternal health, general rearing problems, and housing problems.

Table 3.12 Reasons for not wanting more children
(Percentage of respondents who gave specified reasons)

Reason	Urban middle	Urban lower	Rural	Female	Male	All respondents
General financial burden	11	20	19	16	17	17
Already have number of children wanted	10	5	16	11	9	10
Health hazard of pregnancy; maternal health	8	5	9	11	3	7
General rearing problems	2	4	12	8	4	6
Housing problems	10	5	0	6	3	5
Restrictions on job, career	5	2	4	5	2	3
To have correct number for childrearing, ease of handling, happiness	1	3	3	0	4	2
To retain desired balance of sexes	2	1	1	2	1	2
General emotional strain	1	1	3	2	1	2
Spouse doesn't want more children	1	2	2	0	3	2

The financial burden of another child was most often mentioned by the urban lower-class, rural, and male groups—although the difference between male and female respondents on this reason was slight. More rural respondents than others said they already had the number of children they wanted; more in this SES group also mentioned problems related to pregnancy or maternal health and rearing problems. The middle class mentioned general childrearing problems least often but frequently mentioned the effects of another child on the mother's health, housing problems, and restrictions on job or career. For women general rearing problems, the hazards of another pregnancy, and restrictions on job or career were particularly salient.

When one compares Table 3.12 with Tables 3.9 and 3.10, the main difference is that in identifying general disadvantages of children, respondents more frequently mentioned psychological and affective problems like restrictions on time, anxiety about health, general emotional strain, and noise and disorder, whereas when asked to give reasons for not wanting more children, they mentioned physical and economic problems like the financial burden, rearing and housing problems, and restrictions on job or career.

Discussion of open-ended responses

With regard to response frequencies, respondents mentioned more advantages of having children than disadvantages. About three advantages were cited for every two disadvantages. Urban middle-class respondents mentioned the greatest number of disadvantages; the rural group mentioned fewer disadvantages than either of the two urban groups.

For the question on the advantages of having children, the dominant categories mentioned were happiness, love, and companionship (love and affection; play, fun with children; happiness for the family), the dimension of childrearing satisfactions (pleasure from children's growth and development, children to carry out parent's hopes and aspirations), personal development of parent (incentives to succeed, fulfillment of self), and benefits to the family unit (children as a bond between husband and wife). Less salient were economic benefits and security (economic help in old age, unspecified help), kin group benefits (continuity of family name), and social and religious influences.[3]

When respondents were asked about the advantages of children to others in the community rather than to themselves, their responses became more general and conventional.

The most salient disadvantages of having children were restrictions on alternative activities (restrictions on time, on social life, on job or career, and general lack of flexibility and freedom). Other salient disadvantages were emotional problems (such as the emotional strain caused by children, childrearing problems, health problems of children, noise, disorder, and nuisance), financial problems, and physical demands on parents.[4]

The questions about advantages and disadvantages of having children tended to elicit general responses. When asked more specific questions about their rationale for wanting or not wanting children–e.g., why

3 It is worth noting that for Japanese respondents in Hawaii (all of whom were urban), the most salient specific values were companionship and avoidance of loneliness, pleasure from children's growth and development, and children as family life. In Hawaii, furthermore, respondents tended to value children more for their contribution to the individual parent's happiness than for their contribution to happiness for the whole family (Arnold and Fawcett, 1975:42–43).

4 For Japanese respondents in Hawaii the most salient disadvantages were general lack of flexibility and freedom, financial costs, emotional strain, restrictions on job and social life, general childrearing problems, disciplinary problems, and physical demands (Arnold and Fawcett, 1975:49). The difference between the response patterns of the two samples may be due to differences in their sociocultural contexts.

they would not want fewer or more than a certain number of children—respondents gave more concrete and realistic answers. The question about why they did not want fewer than the desired number was intended to reveal a threshold value for wanting children. That is, respondents might consider there to be disadvantages to having fewer than the desired number of children. Interestingly, respondents gave reasons for not wanting fewer that were mainly for the benefit of children, not of the parents. In other words, the threshold value led to an empathetic attitude toward children, which became an instrumental value to respondents.

With regard to sex preferences for children, psychological-affective values such as companionship for parents or the personality traits of girls and boys generally ranked higher than such practical values as help with housework or satisfaction in providing for children. Psychological-affective value dimensions were mentioned in relation to girls more frequently than boys. Boys were also valued as heirs.

Structured items

The preceding section has dealt with unstructured questions probing respondents' perceptions of the advantages and disadvantages of children. The VOC questionnaire included structured items intended to reveal values that might not have surfaced with nondirective probing. They consisted of a list of 17 reasons that "people sometimes give for wanting another child" and a similar list of nine reasons sometimes given for not wanting another child. Respondents were asked to rate these reasons as very important, somewhat important, or not important. Tables 3.13 and 3.14 present the percentages of respondents who considered each item to be either very important or somewhat important.

For the whole sample, important reasons for wanting another child were that children are fun to have around the house (87 percent), they help one to learn about life and oneself (83 percent), respondents wanted a companion for their children (77 percent), and they wanted the special feeling of love that exists between parent and child (74 per cent). These reasons are more or less concerned with the value dimension of love and affection. Reasons regarded as unimportant were concern with religious duties (7 percent), pressure from relatives to have more children (13 percent), children as a source of economic help (17 percent), desire for help in old age (29 percent), and to carry on the family name and traditions (36 percent). These reasons are related to social and instrumental values for having children.

Table 3.13 Important reasons for wanting another child
(Percentage of respondents who considered specified reasons to be very important or somewhat important)

Reason	Urban middle	Urban lower	Rural	Female	Male	All respondents
Fun to have children around house	87	91	85	90	85	87
To help me learn about life and myself	83	81	83	88	77	83
Want companion for my child/children	78	79	77	74	84	77
For special feeling of love between parent and child	69	77	76	79	69	74
Enjoy caring for, raising children	54	54	69	64	54	59
Spouse wants more children	49	54	48	60	54	59
Want a boy/another boy	59	61	51	49	65	57
Enjoy having small baby	49	54	59	61	47	54
To have enough children survive to adulthood	44	44	56	52	44	48
Want a girl/another girl	48	47	46	52	42	47
To share what I have and know with children	41	37	47	40	44	42
To make my marriage stronger	32	40	44	43	34	39
To carry on family name, traditions	27	31	51	33	40	36
To have child to help me in my old age	15	20	51	33	25	29
One more person to help family economically	7	12	32	19	15	17
Relatives feel I should have more children	13	10	16	14	12	13
My religious duty to have children	2	2	16	10	4	7

When the response frequencies are analyzed by socioeconomic status and sex, the following trends are observed. In the rural group, higher scores were given to the importance of family name and tradition (51 percent versus 27 and 31 percent for the middle class and

lower class, respectively), help in old age (51 percent versus 15 and 20 percent), economic help (32 percent versus 7 and 12 percent), religious duty (16 percent compared with 2 percent for the other groups), and pressures from relatives (16 percent versus 13 and 10 percent). Wanting a boy was more important than wanting a girl for all subgroups except female respondents.

Reasons for not wanting another child that respondents regarded as important (Table 3.14) were the financial burden to the family (56 percent), the emotional strain (50 percent), not being able to give enough attention to children already born (45 percent), and the restriction of freedom to do other enjoyable things (41 percent). These results roughly correspond to those obtained from the open-ended questions (Tables 3.8 and 3.9). Reasons that respondents considered relatively unimportant were concern about overpopulation (16 percent), problems and strains between spouses that another child would

Table 3.14 Important reasons for not wanting another child
(Percentage of respondents who considered reason to be very important or somewhat important)

Reason	Urban middle	Urban lower	Rural	Female	Male	All respondents
Would be financial burden to family	47	63	58	55	56	56
Would be emotional strain for me	43	51	55	57	42	50
Not able to give enough attention to other children	37	46	51	50	39	45
Would restrict my freedom to do other things I enjoy	48	43	34	53	29	41
Spouse does not want more children	38	34	47	35	44	39
Would be a lot of work, bother for me	36	31	44	46	27	37
Could not spend as much time with spouse	24	25	25	27	22	25
Would cause problems, strains between spouse and me	18	18	33	25	21	23
Concerned about overpopulation	25	15	8	12	20	16

cause (23 percent), and not being able to spend as much time with spouse (25 percent). Respondents' unconcerned attitude toward overpopulation was an unexpected finding, in view of Japan's population density.

More urban lower-class respondents (63 percent) than others considered the financial burden of another child to be important. The emotional strain of another child and not being able to give enough attention to other children were more important to women and the rural and lower-class groups than to men and the middle class. Restriction on freedom was less important for males and the rural group than for the other groups. Strain between spouses was regarded as important by less than a fifth of the two urban groups but by a third of the rural group, who were also more concerned about work and bother. The middle- and lower-class groups attached relatively greater importance to concern about overpopulation than the rural group as a reason for not wanting another child (25 percent and 15 percent, compared with 8 percent); males showed more concern than females (20 versus 12 percent).

The results from Tables 3.13 and 3.14 suggest that traditional reasons for wanting children persist—especially among the rural group, who emphasized the importance of family name, old-age and economic help, and boy preference. On the other hand, the financial burden and emotional strain of another child were important to a majority of lower-class and rural respondents and to nearly half of the middle class. As expected, more women than men were concerned about the emotional burden of a larger family, but men and women placed nearly equal importance on the financial burden.

Why did so few respondents regard overpopulation as an important reason for not wanting another child? If overpopulation in present-day Japan were considered to be a cause of poverty as it is in most developing countries, the Japanese VOC respondents might have attached more importance to it. This result should be taken to mean that although they felt the pressure of overpopulation in Japan, their personal lives were not disturbed by it. The Japanese have a high standard of living owing to their economic achievements, and their reasons for not wanting children derive from other, more personal sources than overpopulation, which is generally considered to be a social phenomenon. Thus the lack of importance attached to overpopulation by our respondents may be taken to signify their unconcern about social problems that do not affect their personal economic wellbeing.

The preceding paragraphs have described results of the structured

items for the total sample. The results were also analyzed separately for those who replied that they actually wanted another child and those who replied that they did not. Results for the two groups are shown in Tables 3.15 and 3.16. The differences in mean scores indicate which items may be most significant in actual childbearing decisions.

As Table 3.15 indicates, respondents who wanted more children generally had higher mean scores on reasons for wanting than those

Table 3.15 Mean scores on reasons for wanting another child, by those wanting and not wanting more children

Reason	Wanting more (N = 199)	Not wanting more (N = 189)[a]
Enjoy having small baby	1.7	1.8
To carry on family name, traditions	1.5	1.5
Want boy/another boy	2.2	1.7*
Want girl/another girl	1.8	1.6*
Relatives feel I should have more children	1.2	1.1
To have child to help me in my old age	1.4	1.4
My religious duty to have children	1.1	1.1
To have one more person to help family economically	1.2	1.2
To make my marriage stronger	1.6	1.4*
To provide a companion for my child/ children	2.6	1.9*
Enjoy caring for, raising children	1.9	1.6*
Spouse wants more children	1.9	1.5*
Fun to have children around house	2.6	2.2*
Raising children helps me to learn about life and myself	2.4	2.2*
To have special feeling of love between parent and child	2.2	2.0†
To share what I have and know with children	1.6	1.5
To have enough children survive to adulthood	1.8	1.7

NOTE: Possible scores range from 1 (not important) to 3 (very important).

* Significant at .001 level.

† Significant at .01 level.

a Twenty-one respondents were uncertain.

who did not want more, and for nearly half of the items the scores showed significant differences between the two groups of respondents. Differences between the two groups on wanting a boy, wanting a girl, to make marriage stronger, to have companion for other children, enjoy caring for children, spouse wants more children, fun to have children around house, to learn about life and self, and special feeling of love were all significant at the .001 or .01 level. Desire for children of a particular sex and expected emotional benefits appear to have been dominant reasons for wanting another child. Differences in the responses of the two groups should be taken to mean that respondents who wanted more children were able to imagine the described benefits more realistically than others and to respond to them in congruence with their desires.

Differences between the two groups in mean scores were smaller for reasons for not wanting another child (Table 3.16). Only one item, emotional strain, showed a difference significant at the .001 level. A less significant difference ($p = .05$) emerged for financial burden, insufficient attention for other children, and problems between spouses.

Table 3.16 Mean scores on reasons for not wanting another child, by those wanting and not wanting more children

Reason	Wanting more ($N = 199$)	Not wanting more ($N = 189$)[a]
Would be financial burden to family	1.7	1.8†
Spouse does not want more children	1.7	1.6
Would restrict my freedom to do other things I enjoy	1.6	1.5
Would be a lot of work, bother for me	1.4	1.5
Could not spend as much time with spouse	1.4	1.2
Concerned about overpopulation	1.2	1.2
Would be emotional strain for me	1.6	1.8*
Not able to give enough attention to other children	1.5	1.7†
Would cause problems, strains between spouse and me	1.2	1.4†

NOTE: Possible scores range from 1 (not important) to 3 (very important).

* Significant at .001 level.

† Significant at .05 level.

a Twenty-one respondents were uncertain.

Attitudes toward children

Forty-five Likert-type items were used to assess respondents' attitudes concerning children and childrearing. Respondents were asked to score these items on a six-point scale ranging from strong agreement (7 points) to strong disagreement (1 point). (Items toward which respondents felt neutral were scored as 4.) Our expectation was that analysis of responses to these structured items might reveal dimensions of values associated with children that could not be obtained from responses to other types of questions.

For convenience of comparison, individual items were organized into nine clusters, based on the results of an aggregate factor analysis of the scores of 2,591 respondents from six countries (see Arnold et al., 1975:49–64). These nine factors were found to describe the following dimensions of the value of children: continuity, tradition, security (VOC Scale 1); parenthood satisfactions (Scale 2); role motivations (Scale 3); happiness and affection (Scale 4); goals and incentives (Scale 5); social status (Scale 6); external control (Scale 7); costs of children (Scale 8); and decision-mindedness (Scale 9). Mean scores for the nine scales and for each attitude item are given in Table 3.17. Examination of the table shows that the scales of goals and incentives, role motivations, and parenthood satisfactions had the highest mean scores, with nearly all items within these scales eliciting strong to moderate agreement and none having scores of 4.0 or less. The other scales had substantially lower mean scores and in some cases extreme variability of mean scores for items within the scales.

Two of the items clustered under happiness and affection (Scale 4)—"A person who has no children can never really be happy" and "The family with children is the only place in the modern world where a person can feel comfortable and happy"—had negative mean scores, whereas in open-ended responses to the unstructured questions happiness and affection emerged as important values. This apparent discrepancy in the findings might be explained by the fact that in the case of the unstructured questions about the advantages of having children, respondents were free to compose their own replies, but in answering structured questions they were required to react to others' statements and therefore to conform in some way to an attitude structure the investigators had in mind.

Under external control (Scale 7), the item "It isn't right for a couple to interfere with nature by deciding to limit the number of children they will have" elicited moderate agreement. When translated into Japanese, this statement conveyed nuances of ideological and moral

Table 3.17 Mean scores on 31 VOC attitude items, by nine subscales
(Scales based on aggregate factor analysis for all countries)

Scale and item	Mean score
Goals and incentives (Scale 5)	6.2
Having children gives a person a special incentive to succeed in life	6.7
Having children around makes a stronger bond between husband and wife	6.2
One of the highest purposes in life is to have children	5.8
Role motivations (Scale 3)	5.6
After becoming a parent, a person is less likely to behave immorally	6.1
It is only natural that a woman should want children	6.0
It is only natural that a man should want children	5.9
A girl becomes a woman only after she is a mother	5.4
A boy becomes a man only after he is a father	4.4
Parenthood satisfactions (Scale 2)	5.5
Just the feeling a parent gets of being needed is enough to make having children worthwhile	5.6
A person who has been a good parent can feel completely satisfied with his achievements in life	5.5
One of the best things about being a parent is the chance to teach children what they should and should not do	5.4
Decision-mindedness (Scale 9)	4.4
A couple ought to think seriously about the inconveniences caused by children before they have any	5.8
The first thing a couple should think about when deciding to have children is whether or not they can afford it	5.1
Before having a child, a couple should consider whether it would interfere with the wife's work or not	4.2
Before having a child a couple should consider whether they would rather use their money for something else	2.5
Happiness and affection (Scale 4)	4.1
It is only with a child that a person can feel completely free to express his love and affection	5.8
A person who has no children can never really be happy	3.6
The family with children is the only place in the modern world where a person can feel comfortable and happy	2.9
Costs of children (Scale 8)	4.1
Children limit you in what you want to do and where you want to go	4.5

Table 3.17 *(continued)*

Scale and item	Mean score
Having children causes many disagreements and problems between husband and wife	3.0
Raising children is a heavy financial burden for most people	4.8
When you have children, you have to give up a lot of other things that you enjoy	4.3
Continuity, tradition, security (Scale 1)	4.0
A person can feel that part of him lives on after death if he has children	4.8
It is important to have children so that the family traditions will live on	4.7
One of the best things about having children is the true loyalty they show to their parents	4.1
A man has a duty to have children to continue the family name	4.0
A good reason for having children is that they can help when parents are too old to work	2.7
External control (Scale 7)	4.0
It isn't right for a couple to interfere with nature by deciding to limit the number of children they will have	5.1
Considering the pressures from family and friends, a person really doesn't have much choice whether or not to have children	2.8
Social status (Scale 6)	2.8
A person with children is looked up to in the community more than a person without children	3.0
A young couple is not fully accepted in the community until they have children	2.5

beliefs to the Japanese respondents and they were therefore more susceptible to it. As we shall see in Chapter 5, however, the Japanese respondents reported positive attitudes toward contraception and high rates of contraceptive practice. Such an apparent contradiction may be explained by the reasoning that ideal opinions such as that expressed here do not always lead to corresponding practice. In other words, the respondents may have agreed that in an ideal situation it is wrong to interfere with nature but felt compelled to interfere because of economic or other circumstances.

The two items clustered under social status (Scale 6)–"A young

couple is not fully accepted in the community until they have children" and "A person with children is looked up to in the community more than a person without children"—received from Japanese respondents the second lowest rating (2.5 and 3.0, respectively) of the six countries sampled (Arnold et al., 1975:58). Only the Japanese in Hawaii rated them lower. The low scores on this scale imply that having children does not enhance one's social status in the modern Japanese community.

Other attitude items that received high scores (above 6.0) but did not fall within any of the clusters of empirically derived scales were affirmative statements about the affectionate bond, the benefits of children, and love, loyalty, and companionship. Items that obtained low scores (below 3.0) were those describing children as economic benefits, obligations, or a means of help in old age.

When the scale scores are broken down by SES group (Table 3.18), relatively small differences across groups are observed. The rural group, however, scored notably higher than either of the urban groups on continuity, tradition, and security, as expected. The rural group also scored higher on happiness and affection and lower on costs of children.

Scores on the 45 items were also factor analyzed separately for the Japanese respondents, by means of principal components analysis with varimax rotation. Six factors were derived by this method. To interpret the meaning of the six factors, items with loadings over .40 were identified and grouped together within each factor, and their factor scores as well as means were compared. The factor structures are presented in the Appendix Table. Fourteen, or about one-third, of the 45 items clustered in factor I. Of these 14 items, four stress parental goals and incentives, three are concerned with role motivations, two are related to parenthood satisfactions, and the rest are concerned with the dimension of happiness and affection. Since the dominant value dimensions of this cluster are parental goals/incentives and role motivations (nine of the 14 items), an appropriate label for this factor is *parental incentives and role motivations.*

Factor II contains nine items with loadings above .40, of which six stress continuity, tradition, and security, two are concerned with happiness and affection, and one is unclassified. This factor is therefore designated as *continuity, tradition, and security.*

Four of the six items clustered under factor III are concerned with financial and emotional burdens of raising children and the other two emphasize decision-making in relation to parenthood. This factor has accordingly been labeled *costs of children.*

Table 3.18 Mean scores on nine VOC attitude scales, by socioeconomic group

Scale	Urban middle	Urban lower	Rural
Goals and incentives (Scale 5)	6.0	6.2	6.3
Role motivations (Scale 3)	5.4	5.6	5.7
Parenthood satisfactions (Scale 2)	5.2	5.3	5.7
Decision-mindedness (Scale 9)	4.3	4.5	4.5
Happiness and affection (Scale 4)	3.9	4.0	4.6
Costs of children (Scale 8)	4.2	4.4	3.8
Continuity, tradition, security (Scale 1)	3.6	3.6	4.8
External control (Scale 7)	4.0	3.9	4.0
Social status (Scale 6)	2.7	2.7	3.0

Under factor IV, two items are concerned with the enhancement of social status, one item emphasizes role motivation, and the fourth is unclassified. This factor may therefore be called *social status.*

All three items under factor V stress the importance of weighing alternatives to children. Therefore an appropriate label for this factor is *alternatives to children.*

Of the items with high loadings under factor VI, one is related to parenthood satisfactions from children and the other, to happiness and affection. Because neither value dimension is dominant, the factor is not easily characterized. For this reason it has not been assigned a label.

A further interesting result of the factor analysis is the relationship between the loadings under the six factors and the mean scores of the attitude items. (See the Appendix Table.) Items with high factor loadings also received high mean scores, except for items under factors II and IV that emphasize costs of children and social status. None of the high factor loadings had negative signs.

Separate factor analyses for the subgroups of Japanese respondents

(by SES and sex) revealed variations among subgroups in factor loadings. These analyses are not reported in detail in this volume. Nevertheless, certain consistencies of high factor loadings (over .40) among these subgroups, in comparison with the factor loadings from the factor analysis of the total sample described above, deserve comment. For the items in factor I (parental incentives and role motivations), for example, consistently high loadings were obtained for the middle-class and male groups. For items in factor II (continuity, tradition, and security) the male group showed consistently high factor loadings. For items in factor III (costs of children) the lower-class, female, and male groups showed consistently high factor loadings, while in factor IV (social status) the high loadings occurred among the rural, female, and male groups. For items in factor V (alternatives to children) only the rural group showed consistently high factor loadings.

In general, results of the factor analysis reveal that although the factor loadings are not so strong or consistent as in other VOC countries, the value dimensions extracted from the factor loadings are quite congruent with the dimensions obtained from the aggregated data from the six countries. Furthermore, consistently dominant factor loadings were obtained in the male and middle-class groups.

Differences among results

At this point, it may be useful to discuss differences in results obtained from the open-ended questions about the advantages and disadvantages of having children, the structured items about reasons for wanting and not wanting more children, and the nine scales based on aggregate factor analysis of the attitude items concerning children and parenthood. The responses given to the attitude items differed somewhat from those obtained from the open-ended questions and items about reasons for wanting and not wanting more children. The value dimensions reflecting strongest agreement in the attitude scales were goals and incentives from children, role motivations, and parenthood satisfactions, followed by decision-mindedness in childbearing and costs of children. The dimension of happiness and affection received an almost neutral mean score overall, although it was slightly positive for rural respondents. The scale on continuity, tradition, and security received a negative score for urban respondents, but a positive one among rural respondents. Items suggesting that children confer social status on their parents received negative scores among all subgroups.

As noted earlier, items on happiness and affection were highly salient in responses to open-ended questions, yet were relatively unim-

portant in responses to the attitude scales. How could such discrepancies among results be accounted for? It will be recalled that both the open-ended questions and the structured items on reasons for wanting or not wanting more children attempted to ascertain respondents' *direct motives* for having children. The attitude items, on the other hand, expressed *general opinions* about raising children. Responses to the attitude items thus did not reveal respondents' direct motives for having children but rather suggested certain value dimensions associated with children. Furthermore, the attitude items directed respondents' attention to attitudes expressed according to the investigators' intent and may therefore have created a response bias.[5] Because the discrepancies in the results may be accounted for by such methodological differences, these results should be interpreted with caution. Findings from the other five VOC countries reveal similar discrepancies in data obtained from the three different methodologies. For details see the introductory volume of this series (Arnold et al., 1975).

5 Stephan (1962:429) has pointed out the following pitfalls of attitude measurement in family planning research. Responses given to structured questions may represent a compromise among many motives. Researchers may erroneously infer from the responses that certain motives are primary. Thus, attitudes that are intended to be the object of measurement may not exist in individuals in crystallized form. Although the methods selected for the Value of Children Study were intended to explore the dimensions of the values associated with children by parents and were not used for family planning research, this warning may still be relevant to the apparent discrepancies in the results.

4

perceived economic costs and benefits of children

In the preceding chapter we examined respondents' opinions about having children as assessed by open-ended questions, structured questions, and attitude scales. The results showed that respondents associated economic as well as emotional costs and benefits with children. This chapter focuses on these economic costs and benefits, including utilitarian values of children. In the following chapter we will explore how perceived economic and psychological costs of children interact with favorable attitudes toward raising children in an effort to determine the relative influence of each on VOC respondents' childbearing decisions.

Economic costs

As we saw in Chapter 3, responses to both open-ended and structured questions indicated that the financial costs children entail were salient, important, and burdensome to many Japanese respondents. Two financial disadvantages of children were especially prominent, the general financial cost of raising children and the expense of children's education.

To probe further economic motivations in childbearing, the VOC questionnaire included several questions specifically about the financial burden of children. One of these was the following: "We would like to know how much of a financial burden it is to raise children, for a family in your circumstances. If you were to raise only *one* child, would it be fairly easy economically, somewhat of a financial burden,

or a heavy financial burden? How about two children? Three children? . . . Six children?" Table 4.1 shows that, in their present circumstances, 71 percent of the respondents thought it would be fairly easy to raise one child, but more than a quarter (27 percent) thought it would be somewhat of a burden. Forty-seven percent thought raising two children would be fairly easy economically; almost as many (46 percent), however, thought two children would constitute somewhat of a financial burden. Only 21 percent of respondents thought raising three children would be easy, while 50 percent thought it would be somewhat burdensome and 29 percent said it would be very burdensome. When four children were mentioned, the largest proportion of respondents (65 percent) said raising them would be a heavy burden. These results provide a rough index of the financial burden of different family sizes as perceived by Japanese parents who, in many cases, indicated they had not completed their family building.

Respondents were also asked whether they would be economically better or worse off with more children: "Some couples feel that the more children they have, the better off the family will be economically. Others feel that having a lot of children will make their family less well-off. How do you personally feel about this?" As seen in Table 4.2, 64 percent of respondents said having more children would make the family worse off, whereas only 6 percent said the family would be better off with more children. (Thirteen percent said it made no difference and 11 percent qualified their answers by saying that a family with

Table 4.1 Perceived financial burden of raising different numbers of children

(Percentage distribution of respondents who considered raising specified numbers of children to be fairly easy economically, somewhat of a financial burden, and a heavy financial burden)

Number of children	Fairly easy	Somewhat of a burden	Heavy burden	All responses
1	71	27	2	100
2	47	46	6	99
3	21	50	29	100
4	7	27	65	99
5	4	10	86	100
6	2	4	93	99

NOTE: Percentages may not sum to 100 because of rounding.

Table 4.2 Family size and economic status
(Percentage of respondents who said more children make a family better or worse off economically)

Economic status	Urban middle	Urban lower	Rural	Female	Male	All respondents
Worse off	63	68	61	62	66	64
Makes no difference	16	10	13	13	13	13
Better off	5	6	6	5	7	6
Worse off at first, less so later	12	10	11	14	8	11
Depends	1	5	2	3	3	3
Other	1	0	5	2	2	2
No answer	2	1	2	1	2	2
Total	100	100	100	100	101	101

NOTE: Percentages may not sum to 100 because of rounding.

more children would be worse off at first, while the children were young, but less so later.) Differences among subgroups were negligible. If, as seems plausible, the respondents interpreted the question as applying to themselves, a clear majority believed they would be worse off with a large family.

What about respondents' perceptions of the cost of raising their children in relation to the family's resources? Respondents were asked to estimate how much money it had cost them to raise their children over the previous 12 months. Many understandably had difficulty answering this question, because expenditures on children for such things as food and housing are made as part of general household expenditures. Thus the estimates may not be realistic. Nevertheless, they indicate respondents' perceptions of the cost of children.

According to reported expenditures (Table 4.3), respondents spent an average of only 10 percent of their income on their children, or slightly over 5 percent per child. (It should be noted that the children of our sample were mostly of preschool age.) Middle-class respondents, with the highest average income, estimated spending the smallest proportion (8 percent) of income on their two children, whereas the rural group, with the lowest average income, estimated spending the largest proportion (16 percent)—though in absolute terms less income—on the same average number of children.

From these estimates and the fact that only 29 percent of the re-

Table 4.3 Estimated expenditure on children during past year
(Thousands of yen)

Item	Urban middle	Urban lower	Rural	All respondents
1. Average amount spent on all children	180.7	140.5	167.0	162.7
2. Mean family income	2,343.0	1,637.5[a]	1,024.0	1,668.1
3. Percentage of income spent on children (1/2)	8	9	16	10
4. Mean number of children	2.0	1.6	2.0	1.8
5. Percentage of income spent per child (3/4)	4	5	8	5

a Mean family income of lower-class respondents exceeded 1,500 thousand yen (the cutoff point dividing the lower-class and middle-class groups) because other criteria in addition to income were used to identify the lower-class group (occupation, home ownership, consumer durables owned).

spondents said it would be a heavy burden to raise three children, the perceived economic cost of children, in relation to family income, does not appear to have been a major constraint to having more than two children. Responses to a related question bear out this inference. Respondents were asked: "Suppose your family income increased to double what it is now. Would that affect the number of children you want?" Eighty-one percent of respondents replied that they would not change their desired family size even if their income were doubled.

The acute housing shortage in Japan, mentioned earlier by some respondents as a reason for not wanting more than a desired number of children, may have contributed to respondents' desire to keep their family size small. The questionnaire did not contain a specific question on this topic, however, so we are not able to assess adequately the importance of living space in relation to other considerations.

In general, responses to the VOC questions discussed in this section suggest that perceived economic costs of children—or at least of large families—were of concern, but not of utmost concern, to the Japanese parents interviewed. Other factors, such as noneconomic costs associated with large families or noneconomic rewards ascribed to small families, would seem to have additional bearing on respondents' attitudes toward family size.

Economic benefits

Children are sometimes regarded as economic assets by parents, espe-

cially in traditional societies. Children can do household chores, help run family farms or businesses, support their parents in old age, and inherit family property. Children perform some of these functions as children, others when they get older; and parents may gain satisfaction from having children to fulfill these needs. How do contemporary Japanese parents regard such matters?

As reported in Chapter 3, expected help with housework and family chores was given as a reason for wanting a daughter by a fifth of respondents (Table 3.6) and unspecified help in old age as a reason by only 1 percent. Similarly, few respondents gave economic reasons for wanting sons—8 percent citing unspecified help, 5 percent mentioning help in old age, and 3 percent mentioning help in the family business (Table 3.7).

Later in the interviews, respondents were asked specifically whether they expected economic or practical help from their sons or daughters, either while the children were growing up or after they became adults. Twenty-five percent of the sample said they expected help from their sons, as compared with 62 percent who had no such expectations (Table 4.4). Even fewer respondents (14 percent) expected help from their daughters. A substantial majority of both urban groups did not expect economic help from their sons, compared with fewer than a fifth of both groups who did expect such help; but among rural respondents 43 percent anticipated some help from their sons. It is noteworthy that despite Japan's advanced modernization, such a traditional expectation of sons has survived among rural people.

Table 4.4 also shows respondents' anticipated reliance on children for financial support in old age. Sixty percent of the middle-class group and 57 percent of the lower class did not expect to rely on their children in old age. Only in the rural group did a majority (73 percent) have such expectations. For the total sample, slightly more females (48 percent) than males (41 percent) expected to be reliant on their children.

The general result seems to reflect a diffusion of modern thought. That is to say, most VOC respondents appeared to hold the view that after rearing their children their duties would be finished and their children would be independent, living independently from them. This attitude, which has probably been influenced by Western individualism, was quite unthinkable in prewar days. Elderly Japanese parents, those born in the Meiji period and prewar era, believe that children have a duty to take care of their parents in return for the sacrifices the parents endured in bringing them up (*oya-koko,* 'be loyal to parents'),

Table 4.4 Expected economic reliance on children
(Percentage distribution of respondents expecting economic or practical help from chidlren)

Reliance	Urban middle	Urban lower	Rural	Female	Male	All respondents
Expect help from boys						
Yes	15	17	43	28	23	25
No	74	66	47	58	66	62
Uncertain	11	16	11	14	11	13
No answer	0	1	0	1	0	0
Total	100	100	101	101	100	100
Expect help from girls						
Yes	9	12	21	19	9	14
No	83	77	66	71	80	75
Uncertain	8	10	13	10	11	10
No answer	0	1	0	1	0	0
Total	100	100	100	101	100	99
Expect to rely on children for financial support in old age						
Yes[a]	29	31	73	48	41	45
Not at all	60	57	17	40	48	44
Depends	8	9	9	7	10	9
Uncertain	2	2	2	3	2	2
No answer	0	2	0	1	0	1
Total	99	101	101	99	101	101

NOTE: Percentages may not sum to 100 because of rounding.

a Category includes those who said they would rely a great deal plus those who said they would rely only a little.

that children should support their parents economically or psychologically.

Table 4.5 indicates changing opinions on this matter. A series of questions asked for opinions about whether children nowadays (compared with when the respondent was growing up) are more willing, just as willing, or less willing to live with their parents after marrying, to give part of their wages to their parents when they start earning, to support their parents in old age, and to help with chores around the house or in the family business. A majority of the VOC sample replied

Table 4.5 Perceived changes in the economic utility of children over time
(Percentage distribution of respondents who said children are more, less, or just as willing nowadays to assist parents)

Type of assistance	More willing	Just as willing	Less willing	Of those who said "less willing," percentage who disapproved of change
Live with parents after marrying	5	11	77	30
Give part of wages to parents	7	16	64	30
Support parents in their old age	2	18	72	45
Help with household chores	2	18	75	46

NOTE: Percentages do not sum to 100 because other responses ("depends" and "don't know") are not included.

that children are less willing than in the past to give these kinds of help to their parents. As shown in the last column of Table 4.5, a substantial minority of those who believed that children nowadays are less willing to assist their parents also believed that such a trend is unfortunate.

Respondents were also asked what means of financial support they might have when they got old. As shown in Table 4.6, most said they would rely on savings (54 percent). Other frequently mentioned sources of support were continuing to work (cited by 27 percent), children (26 percent), social security (25 percent), and investments (12 percent).

Although psychological and economic support from children over the long run might be considered as a potential benefit of having them, despite the economic and psychological costs of rearing children, most of the VOC respondents did not regard the possibility of such support as a benefit of parenthood. One cause of the decline in traditional expectations from grown children in Japan may be an increase in modern attitudes. Another may be that rapid growth of technological industries and the disappearance of small-scale and family enterprises have separated the work place from the living place. Employment outside the home has become commonplace. Children are no longer needed for family businesses. In addition, workers and old people are increasingly being taken care of by the government or employers through

Table 4.6 Types of financial support expected in old age
(Percentage of respondents expecting specified types)

Type of support	Percentage expecting support[a]
Savings	54
Continuation of work	27
Children	26
Social security	25
Investments	19
Insurance	10
National support to aged	10
Inheritance	8
Help from relatives	5
Other	11

a Multiple responses allowed.

through work opportunities, life insurance, savings, pensions, and old-age homes. For younger people there are well-paying opportunities for employment and a variety of jobs to choose from. For a son to inherit his father's occupation or business is no longer considered as valuable as in the past. Children may go into the occupations they want, and parents allow them to do so.

Such a cool separation of children from the family for the sake of independence is not always regarded by parents as favorable, however. Most parents seek emotional ties with their children, even as they grow old. The extent to which parents expect to live with their children in their later years may be an indicator of emotional ties rather than economic dependence. As Table 4.7 shows, only 23 percent of the VOC respondents had no expectation of living with their children when the children were grown. Most of the others responding to this question said they expected to live with their children until death or only in their old age. Differences among the subgroups were substantial. Whereas 68 percent of the rural group expected to live with their children until death, only 12 and 14 percent respectively of the middle-class and lower-class groups expected to do so. In fact, 39 percent of the middle-class respondents said they would not live with their children at all, compared with only 6 percent of the rural group.

The emotional reliance on children implied by parents' anticipation of living with them is intimately related to the question of whether parents expect financial assistance in old age. To explore this relation-

Table 4.7 Expectation of living with children in old age
(Percentage distribution of respondents by expectation)

Expectation	Urban middle	Urban lower	Rural	Female	Male	All respondents
Not at all	39	24	6	21	24	23
Yes, only for a few years after marriage	4	5	1	1	5	3
Yes, only in my old age	16	22	10	16	16	16
Yes, until my death	12	14	68	33	31	32
Other	27	34	14	28	22	25
No answer	2	2	0	1	2	1
Total	100	99	99	100	100	100

NOTE: Percentages may not sum to 100 because of rounding.

ship further, we asked respondents whether they thought their children would give them some money from time to time after the respondents stopped working (Table 4.8). Thirty-seven percent did not expect any money from their children, but most of the others expected such support whether living with their children or not (22 percent), in the case of living with them (14 percent), or according to circumstances (24 percent). More rural respondents gave positive responses, both absolute and conditional, to this question than did the other SES groups (78 percent, compared with 45 percent for the middle class and 57 percent for the lower class). More than half of the middle class (52 percent) did not expect to receive money from their children under any circumstances, but this response was less common among the lower class (38 percent) and the rural group (22 percent). More wives than husbands expected money from their children regardless of the circumstances.

Discussion

The following points emerge from the results presented in this chapter:

First, respondents said that in their present financial circumstances they did not worry much about raising children. Most said they would not have more children than desired even if their incomes were to double, and they tended to believe that having more children would make their economic conditions worse. In other words, given their circumstances, most respondents considered two or three children to be optimal. This finding not only suggests that respondents were de-

Table 4.8 Expectation of money from children
(Percentage distribution of respondents by expectation)

Expectation	Urban middle	Urban lower	Rural	Female	Male	All respondents
Yes, whether I live with them or not	16	17	32	25	19	22
Yes, in the case of living with them	8	12	23	16	12	14
Not at all	52	38	22	32	42	37
According to circumstances	21	22	23	25	23	24
No answer	3	5	1	2	4	3
Total	100	100	101	100	100	100

NOTE: Percentages may not sum to 100 because of rounding.

liberately controlling their family size; it suggests also that they were doing so to minimize the economic and psychological costs of child-rearing.

Second, VOC respondents perceived a great reduction in the economic utility of children in recent years, a phenomenon that may be due to the diffusion of Western pragmatism and the separation of work place and residence. This decline in children's economic utility coincides with a decline in economic motivations for having children. However, many VOC respondents regretted the diminished willingness of modern Japanese children to support or assist their parents economically. In this respect they are probably representative of most Japanese parents, many of whom look back with nostalgia to the period when stronger emotional and economic ties existed between parents and their children, when small-scale industries and family enterprises were closely connected with family life. In contrast, the modern attitude toward childbearing is pragmatic: the economic and psychological costs of children are minimized, while the emotional rewards of children are maximized. Recognizing that children entail certain costs, however, Japanese couples are inevitably led to control their family size. In this connection, the role of family planning in modern-day Japan is of the utmost importance. In the next chapter we turn to decision-making about family size and the status of family planning.

5

family size and family planning

It practically goes without saying that the number of children people consider to be ideal and the number they have in reality is likely to depend upon values ascribed to children by their society, the economic structure of that society, and its stage of development. Moreover, certain discrepancies can be expected between ideal and real family size, especially in less developed countries. As a country modernizes and its living level rises, such discrepancies tend to diminish. This is due to the widespread adoption of family planning, which goes hand in hand with socioeconomic development and enables couples to make their ideal family size a reality.

In Japan the ideal number of children per family is about three, more than half of Japanese couples considering this number as being ideal.[1] The two-child family is somewhat less favored, perhaps for the

1 The two-child family started to become common around 1960 as postwar economic growth began to accelerate. Earlier average family size in Japan had been much larger: 2.37 in 1955, 3.65 in 1950, and 4.71 in 1930 (Office of the Prime Minister, 1959:167). The family planning knowledge, attitude, and practice (KAP) survey conducted by the Mainichi Newspapers in 1959 found that the average number of children per family was just 2.0. This number increased somewhat in the 1960s (reaching 2.14 according to the survey of 1965), then began to decrease again (falling to 1.9 in 1971). The ideal number of children per family somewhat exceeded the actual number. According to the 1971 survey, for instance, 46 percent of those sampled wanted three children whereas 33 percent wanted two children. The most recent survey (1975) indicated no

reason that if one child dies only one other will remain; and a single-child family is considered unfortunate for both the parents and the child. Moreover, if couples have three children, they have a greater probability of having children of both sexes. Thus, three children are the ideal family-size norm among a substantial proportion of contemporary Japanese parents.

To investigate factors related to preferred and actual family size has been one of the main aims of the present study. The first section of this chapter reports VOC findings concerning family size—present parity, the number of additional children wanted, and ideal family size—and sex preferences of respondents. The second section presents findings related to family planning, including reasons for using or not using contraception, knowledge about contraception, spacing of births, and attitudes toward abortion.

Family-size preferences

As reported in Chapter 2, the mean number of living children for the total sample was 1.9, which is small relative to other countries in the VOC study. The average number for the middle-class and rural groups was about two (2.02 and 2.04, respectively), while that of the urban lower group was less than two (1.6). If respondents' current parity was equal or nearly equal to their completed parity, a drastic reduction of fertility had taken place in just one generation, for the average number of siblings that respondents in all subgroups reported having was about four and a half.

But current parity was not necessarily completed parity, for some respondents may have desired to have more children. In reply to a question on this point, slightly fewer than half of the respondents (48 percent) said they wanted more children, while a similar proportion (47 percent) said they did not want more. Slightly more husbands than wives wanted additional children (52 percent versus 45 percent), as did more urban respondents (58 percent) than rural respondents (40 percent).

Respondents who expressed a desire for more children were asked how many more. Table 5.1 shows that for the total sample the mean number of additional children desired was 0.9, and that the total number of children wanted was 2.8, on the average. This latter result was substantially less than respondents' ideal number of children, which

change in this trend since 1971: average number of children per family remained at 1.9, but 42 percent of respondents considered three children to be ideal and 40 percent considered two as ideal (Mainichi Newspapers, 1976).

Table 5.1 Selected measures of family size

Measure	Urban middle	Urban lower	Rural	Female	Male	All respondents
Mean number of living children	2.0	1.6	2.0	1.9	1.9	1.9
Mean number of additional children wanted	1.1	1.1	0.6	0.7	1.2	0.9
Total mean number of children wanted	3.1	2.7	2.6	2.6	2.9	2.8
Mean ideal number of children	3.2	3.2	3.0	2.9	3.3	3.1
Difference between ideal number and wanted number	0.1	0.5	0.4	0.3	0.4	0.3
Mean number of children in "typical" family in community	2.5	2.5	2.6	2.5	2.6	2.5
Difference between wanted number and "typical" number	0.6	0.2	0.0	0.1	0.4	0.3
Difference between ideal number and "typical" number	0.7	0.7	0.4	0.4	0.6	0.6

for the total sample was 3.1. The difference between ideal and wanted number suggests that, given an ideal situation in which all living conditions were satisfied, respondents would have preferred more children. That this difference was greater for the lower-class and rural respondents than for the middle class suggests that the two lower SES groups may have tended to suppress their wanted number of children more than middle-class respondents.

Interestingly, all subgroups wanted and idealized a larger number of children than the number they perceived to be typical of other families in the community, with the difference being greatest for the middle class. In fact, in our sample the middle class reported a substantially larger desired family size than the other two groups, a finding that is at variance with research in most developed societies. This too suggests that fertility motivations among the less affluent subgroups were suppressed by economic factors and other living conditions in Japan.

Table 5.2 shows sex preferences related to the first child. A slightly higher percentage of all respondents preferred a son for the first child

Table 5.2 Son-daughter preference for first child
(Percentage distribution of respondents)

Preference	Urban middle	Urban lower	Rural	Female	Male	All respondents
Son	39	43	51	32	58	45
Daughter	39	33	30	47	20	34
Doesn't matter	18	17	13	14	18	16

NOTE: Percentages do not sum to 100 because those who said "up to God, fate," etc. are omitted.

(45 percent versus 34 percent who preferred a daughter). A majority of male respondents (58 percent) and a substantial proportion of female respondents (32 percent) preferred a son for their first child, although a larger percentage (47) of women preferred a daughter. Son preference associated with the first child was evident among rural and lower-class groups, but not among middle-class respondents, among whom those having a sex preference were equally divided between sons and daughters. Taken together with reasons for wanting children of a particular sex as elicited by the open-ended questions, the relatively high percentages of rural and lower-class respondents expressing son preference may signify a desire for heirs—an indication, perhaps, of some persistence of traditional values related to children.

When asked about the sex composition of their ideal family, respondents having preferences tended to prefer a boy as their first child (45 percent, as against 36 percent who preferred a girl). Sex preferences for the second child were about equally divided between boys and girls (39 percent and 40 percent). When a third child was wanted the preference was again weighted toward boys, suggesting an ideal pattern of boy-girl-boy for the three-child family. There was also a slight indication of boy preference among the few respondents who wanted more than three children.[2]

What did respondents perceive to be a large or small family size? As Table 5.3 indicates, 97 percent of the respondents replied that one or

2 According to a study of birth-order preference by sex (Matsubara, 1964:105), the average Japanese couple desired the first child to be a daughter and second child a son. As the first child, a daughter can serve as a general helper by doing family chores, whereas a son, even as the second child, can be regarded as the successor of his family. Our findings, however, suggested a reverse pattern of sex preference by birth order. Wyatt (1967) discusses changes in parental motives for wanting sons and daughters in an ideal family, along with changes during the life cycle.

Table 5.3 Perception of small family size
(Percentage distribution of respondents by number of children regarded as constituting a small family)

Number of children	Urban middle	Urban lower	Rural	Female	Male	All respondents
0	2	0	0	0	1	1
1	63	60	46	56	56	56
2	33	39	51	43	40	41
3	3	1	3	2	3	2
All numbers	101	100	100	101	100	100

NOTE: Percentages may not sum to 100 because of rounding.

two children constitute a small family. However, a slight SES difference in the perception of "small" is to be noted: 60 percent or more of the middle class and lower class regarded a family with one child as small, whereas a smaller majority (51 percent) of the rural group regarded a family of two children as small. (In contrast, only a third of the middle class and 39 percent of the lower class considered the two-child family as small.)

Among all respondents, half considered a large family to comprise four children, a fourth considered it to contain five children, and a fifth regarded three children as constituting a large family (Table 5.4). In all subgroups the largest percentages of respondents regarded the

Table 5.4 Perception of large family size
(Percentage distribution of respondents by number of children regarded as constituting a large family)

Number of children	Urban middle	Urban lower	Rural	Female	Male	All respondents
3	14	17	28	23	17	20
4	51	43	55	52	47	50
5	30	31	15	23	28	25
6	2	7	1	1	6	3
7	2	2	1	1	2	2
8	2	0	0	1	1	1
All numbers	101	100	100	101	101	101

NOTE: Percentages may not sum to 100 because of rounding.

four-child family as large; but nearly a third of the two urban groups viewed a family of five children as large and, somewhat unexpectedly, 28 percent of the rural group regarded three children as constituting a large family. More women than men viewed families of three or four children as large, whereas more men than women defined five- and six-child families as large.

Family planning knowledge, attitudes, and practice

Judging from the responses regarding small family size, it is not surprising that most of the VOC respondents knew about birth control, were in favor of it, and practiced it. Nearly all (99 percent) of those sampled indicated some knowledge of birth control methods, and 72 percent acknowledged practicing contraception at the time of the survey (Table 5.5).[3]

Table 5.5 Experience of contraceptive methods
(Percentage of respondents)

Experience	Urban middle	Urban lower	Rural	All respondents
Currently using a method	80	60	77	72
Ever used a method	93	86	88	89
Ever used pill, IUD, sterilization	16	11	21	16

Moreover, many respondents had used contraception even before the birth of their first child, although here we found striking SES differences: 47 percent of the middle class had used contraception between marriage and the first birth, compared with 34 percent of the lower class and only 15 percent of the rural group.[4] It is evident from these data that Japanese VOC respondents recognized the importance of birth control in marriage, for spacing as well as for stopping births.

Respondents were asked whether they knew about or had used par-

3 Our result accords closely with results obtained by the Twelfth KAP Survey conducted by the Mainichi Newspapers, which was carried out in May 1973 with a national stratified sample of 3,750 wives under age 50. The survey found that 81 percent of the women had practiced some kind of contraception. (See Mainichi Newspapers, 1976:296.)

4 The Twelfth KAP Survey of the Mainichi Newspapers found that 35 percent of the respondents had practiced contraception after having their first child (Mainichi Newspapers, 1976).

Table 5.6 Knowledge and use of specific contraceptive methods
(Percentage of respondents)

Method	Had heard about method	Knew how to use method	Had used method
Condom	96	94	82
Rhythm (Ogino) method	92	74	39
Withdrawal	73	62	23
IUD (Ota ring)	89	58	10
Pessary (diaphragm)	83	51	5
Pill	49	36	4
Tubal ligation	89	64	2
Vasectomy	87	62	1

ticular contraceptive methods. As indicated in Table 5.6, the condom was best known and most widely used. Its popularity may have been due to the fact that one can use it easily, without harm, whereas most of the other methods entail the use of chemicals or medical intervention, which might be distasteful or unpleasant. The rhythm method (developed by Kyusaku Ogino in 1924 and a popular method in Japan) and withdrawal were also quite popular among respondents. Only about half of the sample had heard about the pill and only 4 percent had actually used that method.

Attitudes toward contraception and abortion were also assessed. More than three-fourths of the respondents generally approved of married couples' using contraception (Table 5.7). Large majorities also approved of contraception to control the spacing or timing of births after the birth of the first child (86 percent) and to prevent further pregnancies after a couple has had all the children they want (90 percent). As for using contraception to delay the birth of the first child, however, fewer than half of all subgroups expressed approval. This finding suggests that respondents believed the birth of the first child should occur in the natural course of events, unless there is a specific reason to delay it.

With regard to abortion, slightly more than half of our respondents generally disapproved of a married woman's seeking an abortion to prevent an unwanted birth. When asked about specific situations in which a woman might choose abortion, however, at least 90 percent approved if a doctor said it would be dangerous for a woman to give

Table 5.7 Attitudes toward contraception and abortion
(Percentage of respondents who expressed specific attitudes)

Attitude	Urban middle	Urban lower	Rural	Female	Male	All respondents
Contraception						
Generally approve of married couples' using contraception	82	77	75	76	79	78
Generally disapprove of married couples' using contraception	5	4	10	8	5	6
Approve of contraception						
to delay birth of first child	47	36	38	37	42	40
to control spacing of births after first child	89	82	87	88	84	86
to prevent further pregnancies after having all the children wanted	90	89	92	92	89	90
Abortion						
Generally approve of a married woman's having an abortion to prevent unwanted birth	20	22	27	18	29	23
Generally disapprove of a married woman's having an abortion to prevent unwanted birth	53	57	46	60	43	52
Approve of abortion						
if doctor says it will be dangerous for woman to give birth again	99	94	89	92	94	93
if couple cannot afford to have another child	54	65	70	58	67	62
if pregnancy will interfere with wife's work or career	26	20	36	27	27	27
if pregnancy resulted from rape	90	91	92	89	91	90
Friends and relatives ashamed of abortion	36	37	37	43	30	37
Friends and relatives not ashamed of abortion	41	30	32	29	40	34

birth again or if the pregnancy resulted from rape, and 62 percent approved if a couple could not afford to have another child. Only 27 percent of all respondents approved of abortion if a pregnancy would interfere with a wife's work or career.

Substantially more rural and lower-class than middle-class respondents approved of abortion if a couple could not afford another child. A considerable difference was also noted among the three SES groups under the specified condition "if the pregnancy will interfere with the wife's work or career"; 36 percent of the rural respondents, 26 percent of the middle class, and only 20 percent of the urban lower class expressed approval of abortion under these circumstances.

Real experience of abortion reported by our sample – 14 percent among all couples – is shown in Table 5.8, but this is probably not accurate. Because more than a third of the respondents said that their friends and relatives felt it was shameful to have an abortion (Table 5.7), it is likely that some respondents who had experienced abortion did not admit it. The Eugenic Protection Law, enacted in 1948 and revised in 1973, legalized abortion for health and economic reasons. According to Tietze and Murstein (1975:23), 732,600 legal abortions were performed in Japan in 1972 (the year of the VOC survey), representing an abortion rate of 353 per 1,000 live births. The Twelfth KAP Survey reported an abortion rate of 8.8 percent among couples responding to questionnaires simply left at their homes. The discrepancy between these findings and the VOC results may be explained by methodological differences, for the VOC study was based on direct interviews whereas most other surveys, including the Mainichi KAP study, used self-administered questionnaires. In addition, the characteristics of samples vary among studies.

Table 5.9 presents average birth intervals between marriage and first birth and between first and second births. The first birth interval was over a year and a half, on the average, and the second interval was

Table 5.8 Abortion experience
(Percentage of respondents reporting actual abortions)

Number of abortions	Urban middle	Urban lower	Rural	All SES groups
1	11	7	11	10
2	4	5	1	3
3	1	1	0	1

Table 5.9 Birth intervals in months

Birth interval	Urban middle	Urban lower	Rural	Female	Male	All respondents
Mean number of months between marriage and birth of first child	19.7	18.6	18.5	17.0	21.0	18.9
Mean number of months between first and second child	33.1	31.3	35.1	33.0	33.0	33.6

even longer, nearly three years. Differences between subgroups were minor. The Japanese first birth interval was longer than the average interval reported for most subgroups in the other VOC countries (see Arnold et al., 1975:35). When ideal and actual average intervals between marriage and the first birth are compared, we find that the actual interval was often shorter than the ideal given by most respondents (Table 5.10).

Table 5.10 Ideal and actual timing of first birth
(Percentage distribution of respondents)

Interval between marriage and first birth	Ideal spacing	Actual spacing
Less than 1 year	15	31
1–2 years	32	36
2–3 years	31	17
3–4 years	14	6
4–5 years	2	1
5 years or more	0	1
All intervals	94	92

NOTE: Percentages do not sum to 100 because of rounding and because data are unavailable for some respondents.

Discussion

To summarize the findings presented thus far on family size and attitudes toward birth control, the following points deserve emphasis:

First, desired family size ranged from 2.6 to 3.1 children per family among VOC respondents in Japan. Ideal family size was somewhat higher than desired family size, especially among lower-class and rural

respondents, and in all SES subgroups was about three children. The findings from our sample thus accord with those on family-size norms obtained from larger national samples.

It should be understood that ideal family size refers to the number of children preferred given ideal living conditions. The total number of children desired refers to the number of children respondents wanted in their current situations. If ideal family size is greater than wanted family size, then wanted family size is suppressed because of economic or other considerations. If actual family size exceeds ideal family size, then children may have been produced for the sake of utility, but were later found to be a burden. Such was the case with many Japanese families prior to World War II, when economic conditions were difficult and utilitarian attitudes toward children predominated; couples of this type are now more likely to be found in preindustrialized or developing countries. Our findings confirm that limiting family size is practiced by contemporary Japanese families at different socioeconomic levels, who experience many difficulties in coping with accelerating inflation and the dislocations caused by rapid industrialization.

Second, owing perhaps to the demands of modern life, VOC couples approved of contraception in general and in specific circumstances, the exception being to delay the birth of the first child. It is likely that they regarded the first child as a minimum requirement for the maintenance and enjoyment of marriage and the family.

Third, despite approving of contraception, most respondents disapproved of abortion in general, though large majorities approved of it in some situations. Disapproval may be based on the belief that termination of pregnancy is equivalent to homicide and that unwanted births can be avoided through the prevention of pregnancy—e.g., by using contraception. A moralistic attitude toward live births persisted, especially among wives, which may be rooted in oriental ways of thinking, such a guilt feelings and a sympathetic attitude toward the fetus. Thus, taken together with approval of abortion in specific situations, which is based on more or less modern pragmatic judgment, general attitudes toward abortion may still be in a stage of uncertainty: general disapproval coexists with specific approval, a situation that indicates the coexistence of traditional morals (sympathetic attitude toward live births) and modern, pragmatic thinking about abortion.

Fourth, the data on family planning indicate that respondents practiced it not only to control family size but also to regulate the spacing of their births, allowing sufficient time between births so as not to

jeopardize their standard of living (although, as Table 5.10 indicates, the actual interval between marriage and first birth was shorter than the ideal one).

Prediction of family size and family planning

So far we have considered findings that assess important aspects of psychological values of children, economic costs and benefits, and family size and family planning variables. Our final task is to see how the value-of-children (VOC) variables, economic costs and benefits, and socio-demographic characteristics of respondents related to respondents' fertility and family planning behavior and whether they were good predictors of the fertility and family planning variables.

To place the results of this study in a broader perspective, we conducted multivariate analyses of the survey data. The analyses, derived from correlations between pairs of variables, show relationships among the various topics studied. Our primary purpose was to analyze the extent to which measurements of the value of children could predict family size and family planning, especially when various background characteristics of the respondents were held constant.

The particular method used was multiple regression analysis. A description of this method and its application to the present data may be found in the introductory volume of this series (Arnold et al., 1975: 115–29). That volume also shows selected results for Japan and the other countries in the VOC study in a comparative format. In general, we found that the levels of prediction in Japan were quite weak. This finding is probably due to the homogeneity of the Japanese sample and the clustering of the dependent variables within a narrow range. It may also be attributable to response sets or biases that were especially strong in Japan. Certain aspects of the results from Japan are of interest, however. I will present here only a summary table of the regression analysis and comment on selected findings.

Data for prediction of three family-size variables and three family planning variables are shown in Table 5.11. The predictors fall into three groups: socio-demographic characteristics of respondents, economic values of children, and psychological/social values of children. The items within each group, which are mainly self-explanatory, are derived from measures discussed earlier in this book. For further details about the measures, see Arnold et al. (1975:100–2).

Most of the figures within the table are beta weights, indicating the strength and the direction of the relationship between the predictor and the dependent variable, when the effects of other predictors are

Table 5.11 Prediction of selected family size and family planning measures as shown by normalized regression coefficients (betas) and proportion of variance explained (R^2)

Predictors	Dependent variables					
	Total number of children wanted	Ideal number of children	Number of additional children wanted	Number of contra-ceptive methods known	Situational birth control attitudes	Current use of contra-ceptive methods
Socio-demographic characteristics of respondents						
Parity and pregnancy	na	na	−.10*	na	na	na
R^2	na	na	.04*	na	na	na
Age	.13*	.10*	.06*	−.07*	−.04	.04†
Income	.03	−.04	−.05*	.10*	.10*	.14*
Education	.14*	.10*	.17*	.12*	.02	.19*
Urban experience	.15*	.11*	.18*	.14*	−.08*	−.21*
Media exposure	−.02	.05†	−.02	.14*	.06*	−.01
Marriage duration	−.06*	−.06*	−.10*	−.04	−.01	.04
R^2	.06*	.04*	.13*	.12*	.02*	.08*
Economic values of children						
Economic burden to educate children	.04†	.04	.03	.01	.11*	−.02
Financial ease/large family	.19*	.21*	.14*	−.01	.00	.02
Expected economic help	.15*	.14*	.08*	.03	−.07*	−.08*
Decreased utility of children	.02	.05†	.08*	.08*	−.02	.01
Economic benefits of large family	.05*	−.01	.04†	−.04†	.05*	.01
R^2	.10*	.09*	.16*	.13	.05†	.11*

Psychological/social values of children						
Continuity, tradition, security	−.13*	−.12*	−.11*	−.01	.00	−.14*
Parenthood satisfactions	.12*	.07*	.06*	−.06*	−.05	.03
Role motivations	−.10*	−.02	−.12*	−.02	−.01	−.07*
Happiness, affection	.08*	.07*	.05*	−.13*	−.01	.00
Goals, incentives from children	.12*	.02	.02	.01	.08*	.14*
Social status from children	−.06*	.02	−.06*	−.06*	−.11*	−.06*
External controls on childbearing	−.03	.01	−.02	.05*	−.07*	−.02
Cost of children	.05†	−.10*	.04	−.03	.13*	.05†
Decision-mindedness in childbearing	−.04	−.05†	−.01	.01	.14*	−.01
Reasons for wanting children	na	na	.30*	−.14*	−.04	−.16*
Reasons for not wanting children	na	na	−.14*	.03	.01	.16*
Benefits to children of large families	−.08*	−.03	.01	.00	−.02	−.08*
R^2	.14	.12	.25*	.19*	.10†	.18*

na—not applicable.

* Significant at the .01 level.

† Significant at the .05 level.

taken into account. For the rows labeled "R^2", however, the figures represent the proportion of variance accounted for by all of the variables above that particular row.

In the socio-demographic group, education and urban experience are found to be especially strong predictors of the family-size variables. Of particular interest is the direction of the relationship, which is positive. That is, respondents with more education or longer experience in cities tended to prefer larger numbers of children than respondents with less education or urban experience. This finding is contrary to the results from most other VOC countries and may indicate that parents with more favorable prospects, by virtue of their education, felt less constrained to limit their wanted and ideal family size. In this connection, it is of interest to note that current income shows essentially no relationship with family size. Age, on the other hand, has a positive relationship. This could reflect a generational influence, or perhaps be indicative of accumulation of wealth.

The prediction of contraceptive knowledge by socio-demographic factors is fairly strong and in the expected direction. Prediction of attitudes and behavior is not so clear, however. A peculiar finding is the negative relationship between urban experience and birth control attitudes and practice.

The overall level of prediction (R^2) for socio-demographic factors is highest for additional children wanted and contraceptive knowledge. These levels are still quite low, however, in relation to prediction in some other countries in the VOC study.

With respect to economic values, the variables predicting family size include the perception that it is financially easy to raise a large number of children, the expectation of economic help from children, and the belief that larger families are economically beneficial. Economic factors clearly play a part in family-size decisions, although the increments in prediction from this set of variables are not large. With respect to family planning, the most notable finding is the positive relationship between perception of the economic burden of educating children and favorability toward birth control.

The group of predictors labeled "psychological/social values of children" consists mainly of the VOC attitude scales, plus composite scores on reasons for wanting or not wanting another child and a score reflecting the belief that large families are beneficial to children. These measures, it should be noted, include items on perceptions of economic costs and benefits of children. For the attitude scales, the strongest and most consistent finding is the negative relationship be-

tween family-size variables and the scale on continuity, tradition, and security. It is noteworthy that this is in the opposite direction from what would normally be expected, apparently reflecting the preferences for larger families among the middle class, who were better educated and less prone to hold traditional values. The same pattern is shown for the scale on role motivations, which also reflects traditional values.

The highest level of prediction overall is shown for the dependent variable measuring the number of additional children wanted, which is also the variable that is most congruent with the VOC model, since it is indicative of fertility motivations at the time of the interview. The best predictors of this variable are parity and duration of marriage (negative); education and urban experience (positive); the perceived economic benefits of a large family and the financial ease of raising such a family (positive); the scales on role motivations and continuity, tradition, and security (negative); and the scores on reasons for wanting another child (positive) and reasons for not wanting another child (negative). The last two items are of course conceptually very close to the dependent variable, and for that reason they should be strong predictors.

For Japan, it is not surprising that prediction of fertility-related variables should be weak, given the relative homogeneity of the population and the fact that the dependent variables fall within a narrow range of values. The multivariate analysis has given some insights into the factors influencing Japanese fertility, but in general we believe that the descriptive findings on motivations, presented earlier, are of greater value. I will concentrate on those findings in the discussion in the final chapter, attempting to relate the findings to social-psychological theory, the Japanese cultural context, and population policies.

6

summary and conclusions

The purpose of this research, as stated in the introductory chapter, was to analyze the values attached to children by parents—assuming that children are valued according to the satisfactions they provide parents, weighed against the costs entailed in bringing them up. The fundamental assumption underlying the study is that parental satisfactions and costs—psycho-biological, sociocultural, economic—are essential components of motivations for childbearing that interact with culture and environment to influence family-size preference and fertility.

I have emphasized throughout this study the distinctions between reasons for wanting and not wanting children. Parents may want children for a variety of reasons that are not closely linked to personal motivation, such as deference to societal norms about family size and fatalistic or naturalistic orientations toward childbearing (see Rabin, 1965; Rabin and Greene, 1965). Parents may also want children for reasons that are intimately related to personal happiness and well-being—for example, the giving and receiving of love, fulfillment of the marital relationship, a sense of achievement connected with childbearing, or the provision of economic and emotional security in old age. In this study, both types of reasons were assessed and their strength in connection with number of children wanted was investigated, in relation to various dimensions of the costs of children.

The following section summarizes the findings presented in each chapter and discusses some theoretical and hypothetical assumptions regarding values. Subsequent sections examine methodological prob-

lems encountered in the study, relevance of the findings to VOC theory, directions for future research, and issues related to population policy.

The findings

The study explored both positive and negative values that parents associated with children, then analyzed the relationship between these values and disvalues to determine how they operated in a hierarchy of child-related values. The open-ended questions revealed several important facets.

With regard to the advantages of children, emotional rewards for the parent (such as happiness, love, and companionship), childrearing satisfactions (pleasure from growth and development, children to carry out parents' hopes and aspirations), personal development of the parent (children representing incentives to succeed), and benefits to the family unit were more important to respondents than economic benefits and security or kin group benefits of children. When respondents were asked about the value of children as perceived by others in the community, their responses became more general and traditional, apparently in conformity to perceived normative values.

The question concerning why respondents did not want fewer than the desired number of children was aimed at establishing their threshold value for wanting children. In other words, failure to achieve the desired number of children (positive value) itself became a negative value.

Another interesting finding was that some of the benefits of children mentioned by respondents were benefits not to the parents themselves but to their other children or the family as a whole. An example was to provide companionship for existing children, which may be considered an instrumental value. Thus, children's influence on the family was recognized and valued.

With regard to sex preferences, affective values (companionship, personality) were generally more important than instrumental values (help with housework, economic contributions from children). The instrumental value of sons as heirs was quite salient, however.

When asked about disadvantages of having children, many respondents cited such instrumental disvalues as restrictions on alternative activities and financial costs. Psychological disvalues such as emotional strain, children's health problems, and noise and disorder were also salient and important to respondents.

Thus, with respect to the advantages and disadvantages of children,

certain conclusions emerge. Advantages consisted for the most part of affective values (affection, love, companionship) but included instrumental values (children as incentives, helpers around the house, a bond between spouses). It is likely that when negative instrumental values predominate (restriction of activities, financial burden), then the potential positive values in having a child are suppressed.

In citing reasons for wanting and not wanting another child, most respondents ignored traditional reasons (e.g., to continue the family name, inherit property, perform religious duties) while stressing affective values such as love, companionship, and parental incentives for having children. Moreover, in giving reasons for not wanting another child, such as restrictions on their freedom, emotional strain, and the financial burden, Japanese respondents gave about equal importance to psychological and economic factors. However, the financial burden of another child was more important to the urban lower class than to middle-class and rural respondents, and restrictions on alternative activities were less important to the rural respondents than to the other groups.

Analysis of the Likert-type attitude items revealed that parental goals and incentives from children were very important. Somewhat less important value dimensions were role motivations, parenthood satisfactions, and happiness and affection. The dimensions of continuity, tradition, and security and of social status from children received relatively low scores.

A cost-benefit analysis of children was explored in relation to the economic and psychological costs of children to parents. We elicited subjective responses concerning the costs (or burdens) of raising certain numbers of children and compared the results with respondents' estimates of their expenditures on children. Results indicated that Japanese parents did not feel the financial burden of childrearing to be great, especially if they were raising two or three children. Estimated annual expenditures on children came to only 10 percent of total income for the whole sample, which may be due to the young ages of their children.

Utilitarian values of children (especially economic and psychological reliance upon children) were not very strong. In other words, parents were rearing children in the expectation of deriving happiness from them, but after bringing them up most parents did not intend to rely on them financially or emotionally. Their attitude appears to be typical of modern parents in Japan, who try to minimize the economic and psychic costs of children by limiting family size, and to maximize the pleasure they receive from their children as the children

grow up. Thus the economic and psychological costs of children were not perceived in isolation from compensating benefits. Similarly, practical and financial help from children was not important to the VOC respondents, since modern Japanese parents rely increasingly on pensions, savings, and governmental services in their affluent industrial society.

Owing to such pragmatic attitudes toward children, respondents were controlling their family size—for the family's sake, not for the sake of society. They strongly approved of contraception, and even of abortion in certain circumstances. But their desires for children were not completely satisfied, for ideal family size exceeded the total number of children wanted, given present living conditions. Factors respondents mentioned as contributing to their desire for smaller families were the cost of rearing children, inadequate housing, pollution, and overcrowding. Nevertheless, few respondents thought that overpopulation influenced their family-size decisions.[1]

Japan's problems are not unique, nor is the demographic response. In other industrialized countries, couples have tended to reduce family size on pragmatic grounds, and not simply for economic reasons. The discrepancy between preferred family size and actual family size is one of the most crucial problems of the modern family in modern industrial societies. Its solution depends on social and population policies.

Another technique employed in the analysis was multiple regression using three sets of socio-demographic, economic, and social-psychological variables as independent variables. The purpose of this analysis was to predict fertility and family planning variables. The results were generally weak, but gave some useful insights about the patterns of fertility motivations in Japan. For example, in our sample higher education was found to be related to the desire for more children, with both economic and psychological values contributing to this desire.

The results of the regression analysis suggest that highly technical

1 The problems of pollution and overcrowding are widely recognized; 55 percent of the VOC respondents who replied to the country-specific survey said that they did not like raising children in such a polluted environment. But respondents de-emphasized overpopulation as a reason for not wanting children. For a discussion of this apparent contradiction, see page 42. Shortage of housing space, however, is an aspect of overcrowding that does seem to affect family size. The 13th Mainichi KAP survey conducted in 1975 found that more than 60 percent of the households sampled had only 49 square meters of living space and that in these circumstances respondents believed they could not raise more than three children (Mainichi Newspapers, 1976:317).

and complex methods do not always elucidate actual causes. Values operate very subtly in daily situations. They may be directly manifested when elicited by simple questions or a set of structured items, but they become confounded when treated with complex operational methods. Such a process does seem to be operating when we search for such mechanisms as values through the use of different methodologies.

Methodological problems

The interview schedule used in this study included 165 items on a variety of topics. Many of the items were similar in content, the purpose being to explore respondents' values and attitudes in detail. As a consequence, some respondents got a little frustrated during the interviews because questions seemed repetitious to them. Though the refusal rate was rather high (30 percent of the rural sample, 40 percent of the urban sample),[2] fair cooperation was obtained. Some respondents made accusations and expressed worries during the interviews. Other respondents, however, mentioned the fruitfulness of the study, saying they had learned a lot from the questionnaire about their child-rearing attitudes and practices.

Many respondents regarded the questionnaire as somewhat abstract since it included hypothetical questions and was inquisitive and provocative. Although the phrasing and sequencing of questions had been carefully considered, about one-third of the respondents thought some questions were abrupt or not directly related to their own experience. They found the opening paragraph for some questions to be lengthy and boring, and had difficulty responding to questions asking "why." When asked about personal matters like contraceptive practice, miscarriages and stillbirths, income, and ownership of modern consumer durables in a face-to-face interview, respondents seemed somewhat embarrassed (especially when the interviewer was of the opposite sex), though they usually answered each question. Such probing questions could not be avoided, but they might have been made more consonant with the everyday experience of Japanese couples so that the respondents could participate more fully in the interviews, revealing more of their subjective experiences. Owing to the cross-cultural design of the study and to problems of translation, it would not have been possible

2 The refusal rate may have been lower in the rural areas because local health personnel there arranged interviews after project personnel sent letters to eligible couples requesting their cooperation. In the case of urban respondents, such a follow-up procedure was not possible.

to eliminate all of the respondents' objections. An effort was made to elicit culturally relevant data from the Japanese sample by including a number of country-specific questions (see Appendix).

As a consequence of the abstraction and inquisitiveness of the core questionnaire, questions remain as to whether respondents gave accurate responses based on their experience. Doubt could be cast on the rate of abortion experience and statements of income, expenditures, and savings, as well as on responses to some of the attitude items. This shortcoming is characteristic of all interview techniques, however, and one cannot blame only the present study. Still, greater efforts to elicit sincere responses from such surveys must be made.

Finally, some problems of translation from the original English questionnaire should be mentioned. Although we carried out pretests in Japan and performed forward translation (of the original questionnaire into Japanese) and backward translation (of the Japanese version back into English), the Japanese wording still presented difficulties to our respondents, especially the attitude items. "Act of virtue," "up to fate or god," "for most people it is inevitable to have children," "the family with children is all that is good in our society"—these statements in particular sounded alien to most of the Japanese respondents. Although the questionnaire was constructed collaboratively by researchers from six countries, a Western sociocultural context quite different from our own may have predominated. The Japanese respondents did not have the experiential equivalence of the meaning of some terms, in contrast to respondents of other countries. This is a crucial problem of cross-cultural research, although in our research the problem was relatively small. The validity of the instrument of any cross-cultural research must be seriously pre-examined. If a research instrument designed in the context of one society tries to find universality in human behavior without reference to the sociocultural context of other countries, the results may be misleading. The validity of the research technique should therefore be considered in connection with the purpose of the proposed cross-cultural research and the criteria that are used to uncover universality of human behavior. These matters should be carefully weighed before an empirical investigation is undertaken—especially for cross-national research on population.

Theoretical relevance

We now turn to a discussion of the findings in the context of theoretical assumptions regarding the value of children. In the introductory chapter value was defined as one's personal regard for certain objects,

persons, or events. The valued object can be concrete or abstract. It can be either a goal-object or an instrumental means. It can exist in one's consciousness and manifest itself or recede depending on the environmental context, a change within the value holder's system of organizational hierarchies, or new relational dependencies: an object liked at one time may be disliked at another time. Values defined in this fashion can be measured in a variety of ways. First, we can assign a high or low degree, or great or small quality, to the value we attach to a particular object. A pen can be of greater importance than a pencil or of less importance than a watch. An eraser and a pencil can be of equal value as writing implements. Thus, "greater than" or "less than" should be an important category for measurement. There are at least four major scaling systems for measuring value in objects: nominal scale, which clusters objects in certain ways; ordinal scale, which orders objects according to their importance; rating or interval scale, which rates the degree of importance along a continuum from most important to least important, or vice versa; and ratio scale, which has a fixed zero point and thus permits comparison of ratings in absolute terms. By such means, the components of values can be classified by their qualities, which are then decomposed into quantitative terms, leading to an increasingly refined technique of measurement. It is thus possible to see how values of objects are extracted from such measurement, how they are intertwined, isolated, and coherently organized into a system of values, and how such systems differ from one person to another.

In this study we considered the values assigned to children by parents. Children may be liked at one time, but disliked at other times, depending upon parents' experiences or situational constraints (environment). We paid particular attention to the relationship between parents and children that exists as a consequence of their continuing biological linkage, not just in the external relation of social objects. At this point, it would be worthwhile to look at some existing theories of value that emphasize motivational orientation toward objects. I shall mention only a few of these theories, in particular those proposed by Charles Morris and Talcott Parsons.

In his pioneering study on the varieties of human value, Morris (1956) distinguished three types of value: object value, conceived value, and operative value. Object value is concerned with what is preferable (or desirable) in objects, persons, or events. In other words, it refers to an ideal conception of value in objects and individuals. Conceived value refers to preferential behavior directed by anticipation or

foresight toward the outcome of such behavior. For example, a person anticipates that his or her action will have a desired effect on an object before taking that action, the outcome of which, however, may be quite different from the desired outcome because of circumstances beyond the person's control. Operative value refers to the actual direction of preferential behavior toward one object rather than another. That is, it refers to an individual's chosen behavior toward a set of alternative valued objects regardless of whether the person thinks the behavior is preferable or attainable in its outcome.[3]

In an attempt to integrate a model of motivational orientation into a theory of social action, Parsons postulated a theory of value that emphasizes three aspects of value: cognitive, cathectic, and evaluative (Parsons and Shils, 1962). According to his terminology, cognitive mode refers to one's cognitive attitude toward an object, in which one perceives it in relation to a system of dispositional hierarchies. Cathectic mode involves the process by which an individual invests an object with affective significance; it includes positive or negative cathexes upon objects by their gratification or derivational significance with respect to the individual's need dispositions. Evaluative mode refers to the process by which an individual distributes energy with respect to various cathected objects in an attempt to optimize gratification. It includes, according to Parsons's terminology, "the processes by which an actor organizes his cognitive and cathectic orientations into intelligent plans" (Parsons and Shils, 1962:59).

Comparing these two theories, one finds some striking similarities, though their phraseology appears to be different:

1. Both theories rest on cognitive-action concepts encompassing the process of situation (inner and outer situation of an individual) in which an individual acts toward objects.
2. Both theories admit some kind of selective behavior—Morris's operative value roughly corresponding to Parsons's evaluative modes—in a final decision or judgment of the situation.
3. Both theories refer to some kind of resolution resulting from the conflict between object and conceived value (Morris) or between cognitive and cathectic modes (Parsons). Morris's object value is very close to Parsons's cathectic (affective) mode, while conceived value roughly corresponds to cognitive mode.

In summary, the value theory based on the individual's motivational orientation to a situation assumes some kind of choice resulting from

3 A similar definition is given by Smith (1969).

an organized solution of the conflict between ideal value and conceived value or between cathectic and cognitive values toward a specific object or event, within a system of valued objects and behavioral dispositions toward them. Such theories, derived mainly from psychological explanations, are based on an assumption of values operating within a hypothetical individual in a society, and they cannot easily be used to explain the status of a real individual at a particular place and time.

A group model is needed to explain people's motivations *en masse* and the values of a society or class with its own cultural and historical traditions. What kind of model would serve as a conceptual framework for the present investigation? Lois and Martin Hoffman have developed a schematic postulate concerning the components of values of children to parents which is applicable to any group of parents residing in different regions of a society, country, or culture.

Based on a survey of literature on attitudes and motivations of parents for raising children, Hoffman and Hoffman (1973) came up with nine categories of values: (1) adult status and social identity; (2) expansion of the self; (3) morality: religion, altruism, good of the group; (4) primary group ties, affiliation; (5) stimulation, novelty, fun; (6) creativity, accomplishment, competence; (7) power, influence; (8) social comparison, competition; (9) economic utility. The nine value categories were also seen as part of a larger context, with five major components: (1) value of children; (2) alternative source of value; (3) costs; (4) barriers; and (5) facilitators. Clearly, these factors are not only the inherent value of children per se but are the combined results of the VOC dimensions in relation to external factors that influence the attitudes of individual parents. The categories deal with the positive and negative factors influencing the values. However, Hoffman and Hoffman do not fully explain how the components are related to one another in such as way as to influence the value of children.

It is possible that the nine categories of values can be regrouped into more basic components. Take, for example, adult status and social identity (first dimension) and stimulation, novelty, fun (fifth dimension). Both dimensions view children as agents, but they cannot be ordered in the same group of categories. Adult status and social identity can be classified as a sociocultural value emphasizing the adult role acquired through one's society and culture after having children, whereas the dimension of stimulation, novelty, and fun can be classified as a cathectic (affective) value inherent in psycho-biological char-

acteristics derived from interacting with children. In this fashion, the other dimensions of value might be reformulated and grouped into quite different categories.

According to this reclassification, dimensions 1 (adult status) and 3 (morality) seem to belong to the same category in the sense that they emphasize sociocultural roles. Dimensions 4 (primary group ties) and 5 (stimulation, novelty, fun) belong to the affective or psychological value dimension. Dimensions 2 (expansion of self), 6 (achievement, competence), 7 (power, influence), 8 (social comparison, competition), and 9 (economic utility) may be regarded as social-psychological values gained through children. As is clear from such a classification, values regarding children could be ordered according to different schemes, and a systematic integration of concepts is necessary if they are to be used as basic assumptions for empirical testing.

By taking advantage of the foregoing classification of concepts, one can distinguish two kinds of values, those gained directly from watching and interacting with children (psycho-biological in nature) and those gained indirectly as reflection and expansion of self (feedback). In this sense, it would be useful to distinguish between values regarded as inherent characteristics of children (related to parental drives or instincts) and those acquired from society whereby children serve as the instruments of their formation. Thus some of the values of children may be considered as biological or instinctive parental feelings,[4] and other values may be considered as mainly derived from sociocultural norms. The former are likely to be called "intrinsic values of children"; the latter may be called "extrinsic values." These values are intimately related to perceptions and conceptions of children in the manner of hierarchical systems within individual value systems.

It might be argued that in this study we have discovered the contents and functions of these two values. That is to say, we have found, within a general system of values of parents, the range of these two values and how they interact with each other. These two values have positive or negative aspects (like or dislike, approval or disapproval), and they also have strong and weak aspects (how much parents like or dislike, approve or disapprove). In other words, we studied the qualitative as well as the quantitative aspects of these values. Another, related

4 Biological value is defined here as biologically endowed instinctive feelings and motivations that result from intrinsic characteristics—for example, contact with children accompanied by feelings of maternity or paternity, often enhanced by mating and reproductive behavior (cf. Kestenberg, 1956; Rheingold, 1963).

feature of these values is their hierarchical organization by a parent or group of parents. The two values may coexist in balance, sustained by positive and negative qualities as well as strong and weak qualities.

Our first approach was to identify intrinsic and extrinsic values of children by assessing respondents' perceptions of the advantages and disadvantages of children by means of open-ended questions. The method used was a nominal scale. The second approach was to assess the relative importance of reasons for wanting and not wanting children by means of structured questions. This was performed with an ordinal scale. The third approach, the attitude measurement, used a rating scale to measure the quantitative dimensions of values that were itemized in hierarchical clusters. Factor analysis revealed how the items were correlated with each other and clustered in the framework of the VOC dimensions.

Structured questions on costs and benefits of children explored the positive and negative qualities of values. The questions on family size and family planning assessed respondents' efforts to balance positive and negative qualities, when confronted with situational constraints, by reducing the number of children, though sometimes desiring more than that number. Thus the questions measured different modal relations of values. The results, though as yet exploratory, are quite consistent and shed a good deal of light on childbearing and childrearing behavior. The values we obtained can be classified as intrinsic versus extrinsic, positive versus negative, and strong versus weak. In general, respondents exhibited intrinsic values of children more strongly than extrinsic qualities, which were more widely spread and displayed more variety. Furthermore, respondents perceived positive values of children more strongly than negative values. However, in the total framework of respondents' childbearing decision-making the values and disvalues existed in interactive relationships. Thus the values of children did emerge as psychological concerns of parents. If negative values prevailed over positive ones in certain situations, then parents would not want more children. The varieties and intensity of these values may differ from parent to parent, from group to group, and from culture to culture. Assessment of these values for each child would depend on the context. The issues we focused on were measuring how the state, or modal relations, of values—expressed as intrinsic and extrinsic values, positive and negative values (advantages and disadvantages), and intensity dimensions (strong-weak relations, frequencies, correlations)—exist in balance or change in different situations.

Such relationships may be more easily seen with the help of a model

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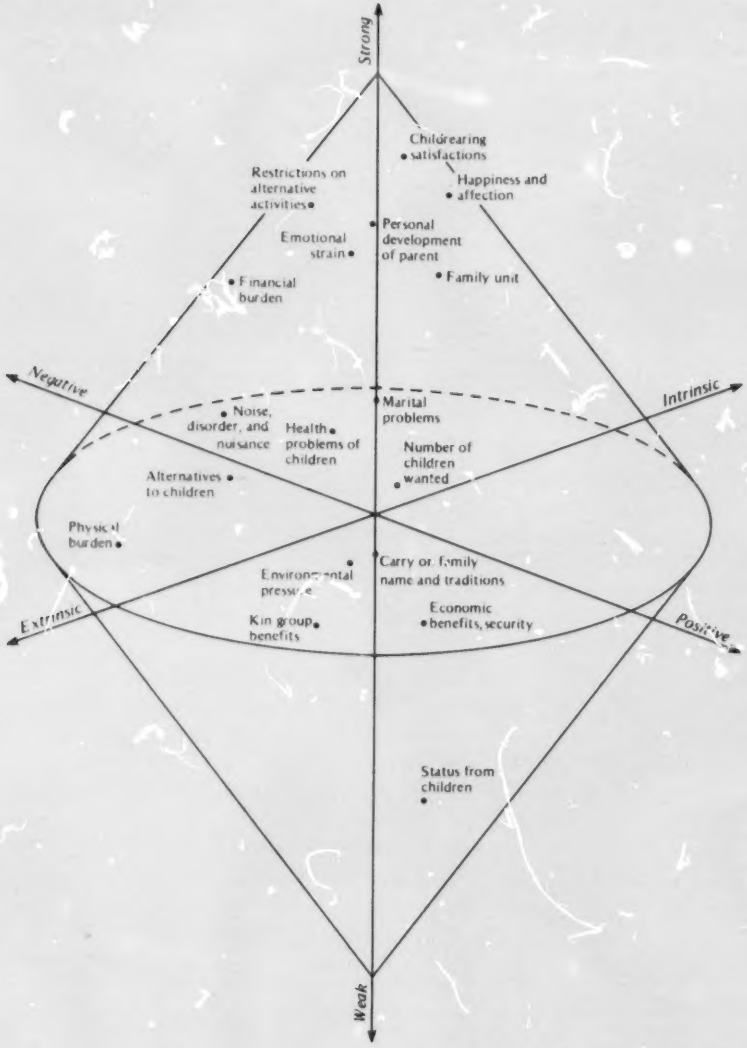
Figure 6.1 Psychological structure of VOC variables among Japanese respondents



(Figure 6.1).[5] Each dimension of values obtained from our study can be localized on a three-dimensional axis showing the sphere of child-related values for an individual or a group, whether the dimension is classified as intrinsic or extrinsic, positive or negative, strong or weak. For example, the dimension of personal development is an external or instrumental value derived from rearing children, so it is characterized as extrinsic. It also exerts a strong, positive influence upon parents; therefore it is localized in the upper front of the sphere. Financial burden is increased by rearing children; it exerts an external influence and is therefore characterized as an extrinsic value. It also exerts a strong negative influence. Thus it is located in the upper left section of the sphere.

Our study focused on group values in selected samples of the Japanese population. Nevertheless, the model derived from theories of individual behavior seems to apply to our study of childbearing behavior and individual decision-making about family planning. For example, the theory of values proposed by Morris could be used as a paradigm for individual decision-making about family size. Namely, object value (the value of an object in an ideal situation) could be applied to ideal family size in an ideal life situation, conceived value (an actual outcome of behavior not achieving an ideal situation owing to extrenal constraints) may be applicable to actual family size in real life, and operative value (actual behavior toward an object) would be applicable to the practice of family planning. Similarly, Parsons's three modes of values (cognitive, cathectic, and evaluative) can be applied to our balanced structure model of values of children. Cathectic (affective-psychological) values can be moderated by cognitive values influenced by external pressures, interpersonal relations, and cultural and environmental constraints—creating an evaluative (actual behavioral or conscious) value of children.

Childbearing behavior as explained by such an individual model can be varied and transformed under various situational constraints. Thus the study of social contexts—of how situational constraints influence individual childbearing choices and values of children—becomes an important issue. Changes in an individual's life, the state of existence of groups and communities, social structures and institutions, innovations in technology and industrialization, the state of culture, education, and folklore—all can influence individual behavior.

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5 This scheme is still conceptual and should later be verified through some quantitative treatment.

Earlier we considered some of these influences: respondents' socioeconomic background, education, modernity, and exposure to mass media. But the exploration of these variables during the interview stage was rather meager, and we inferred the meaning of these variables after collecting the data. The influence on an individual's life of certain dramatic events (the Arab oil embargo of 1973, for instance) can be crucial, as is the impact of industrialization, long-term economic trends (e.g., growth and inflation), congestion, and changes in urban life. Such external constraints have always influenced individual fertility behavior by altering the values attached to children. Although we cannot provide convincing evidence from our cross-sectional data on the impact of such long-term trends, we can still attempt to understand how changes of values regarding children reflect, in the long run, changes in society as a whole.

The following section discusses some problems and issues we were unable to explore in the present study and suggests some new approaches to this relatively unexplored yet important area of research.

Future directions for research

One of the most important findings of the VOC Study was the somewhat different structures of attitudes exhibited by the three socioeconomic groups (urban middle class, urban lower class, and rural) selected for study, although differences were less pronounced than in other VOC countries. The urban middle-class group showed a structure combining intrinsic (affective-psychological) and extrinsic values (particularly utilities and benefits for the sake of children). The urban lower-class group favored a structure centered on extrinsic values (influenced by external situations like income, costs, and burdens, showing pragmatic and modern attitudes). The rural group exhibited a structure combining intrinsic (psychological-affective) and extrinsic values (particularly sociocultural tradition, continuity, or kin group).

Future research should investigate whether such patterns persist or are subject to change according to socioeconomic status. Change in fertility coincident with change in socioeconomic status is well recognized by demographers: higher fertility accompanies poverty and the preindustrialized stage of a society, but tends to fall with the advent of economic growth and technological innovation. One question for future research is whether a marked change of values would accompany such a fertility transition. How would values of children change if Japanese society, for example, further developed industrially and economically? If the middle-class group were to become upper-class by

sociocultural transformation and occupational mobility, would their values remain those of the middle class? If the rural group were transformed into the urban middle class, would the rural pattern of values persist or would it be changed into the pattern of the middle-class group?

Another task of research will be to compare the attitudes toward children that parents of different ages hold and to relate those attitudes to prevailing social and economic conditions during the parents' child-rearing years. In a country like Japan, where drastic social change has taken place in a short period, one would expect to observe different attitudes toward children, for example, among parents born in the 1880s, 1930s, 1940s, and 1950s. It is important not only to correlate changes in attitudes toward children with different periods but also to discover how the society in each period influences the values of each generation. (See Iritani, 1972, for a discussion of this matter.) The coexistence of these generations in a rapidly changing society is likely to create generational conflicts regarding childbearing and childrearing practices. It is important to observe which values have permanence and which reflect the society of a given period.

Another question for future research is how values of children change when young children grow older and parents have more children. At the time of marriage and the conception of a first child, for example, a couple's parental motivations may be strongest. After a number of difficult and unexpected situations, their attitudes toward children may change (see Wyatt, 1967). The present study focused on relatively young couples who had at least one child. A longitudinal study with a small sample should shed light on changing perceptions of children and changes in the interaction of biological-instinctive motives and socioculturally influenced motivations.

Closely connected with this question is the value of children viewed through parent-child relationships. The value of children can be regarded as a dual relationship, or bond, between parents and children—consisting not only of the view parents have of children, but also of the view children have of parents. Such reciprocity in the relationship between parents and children can influence attitudes toward children.

The family and the parent-child relationship are often threatened by the social impacts of a computerized, capitalistic society. Unable to obtain stability, meaning, and creativity from life, people seek material compensations. Competition for these compensations often destroys creative and meaningful life for a family, leading to family tensions. Children become disrespectful toward parents and unmanageable.

Abnormal behavior of both parents and children is commonly reported nowadays—for example, the killing of unwanted children by parents and assaults against hostile parents by their children.

Why does the priceless value of children to parents change into such hostility and hatred? The bond between parent and child, as found in the present study, is based on affective feelings that may have biological roots. Such irrational and emotionally involved relations, however, easily collapse under external pressures unless supported by firm cognitive and intellectual control, mutual understandings, and respect. The disequilibrium caused by parental and child goal-seeking creates a loss of security at home, which in turn becomes the agent of family crises: parents tend to deny their children and children tend to deny their parents, destroying mutual respect and affection.

This study has focused only on one side of the parent-child relationship—namely, parents' perceptions of children—and under specified and normal conditions. We overlooked children's perceptions of parents. Thus the reciprocal influence of parent-child perceptions, particularly in stressful family situations, is an important area of psychological research awaiting further attention.

The study of the substitutive value of children should be of major concern in view of the emphasis on costs and benefits in modern capitalistic society. Children can be replaced with other objects and a balance between children and alternative sources of satisfaction may be considered appropriate for the standard of living in the modern family. Are children indispensable to a couple's standard of living? What substitutes for them can be considered? Modern people exhibit substitutive behaviors in buying something for money to establish their status and authority. In the VOC survey, some questions were concerned with alternatives to children and the process of decision-making (trade-offs). The questions we posed were somewhat abstract, however, and did not establish many meaningful relationships. Thus one task of future research will be to determine how trade-offs between children and other "goods" operate in the minds of modern parents in the actual process of raising children.

Issues related to population policy

It will be recalled that one purpose of this investigation was to assess values attached to children by Japanese parents of different socioeconomic backgrounds, on the assumption that the three SES groups chosen represented varying degrees of modernity—from least modern (rural) to most modern (urban middle class). Thus, although the study

was not longitudinal, by enabling us to compare the values held by less and more modern parents it would, we believed, suggest emerging trends in such values in contemporary Japan. Our findings bore out the assumption that lower SES, or less modern, parents would have more traditional values than higher SES (or more modern) parents, although differences between the SES groups were less pronounced than in the other countries surveyed.

With the acceleration in population growth in developing countries and increasing urbanization in most countries of the world since World War II, there has been a growing awareness on the part of government officials and the public at large of problems related to population. Awareness has been heightened by mass communication campaigns sponsored by governments and private organizations. These educational efforts culminated in the declaration of 1974 as World Population Year and the United Nations-sponsored World Population Conference held in Bucharest in August of that year. Topics discussed at the conference included consumption aspects of population, such as the relationship between population on one hand and natural resources, food supply, and the environment on the other, and the social and economic impacts of rapid population growth, at the individual as well as the societal level.

In July 1974, a month before the Bucharest conference took place, a population conference sponsored by several civic organizations was held in Tokyo, providing an opportunity for Japanese population specialists to exchange views on many of these issues. The conference, which was well publicized in Japan, aroused considerable interest. (For details of the proceedings, see Secretariat, First Japan Population Conference, 1974.) Nevertheless, public attitudes toward family size and population, particularly as it relates to broader social and economic issues, do not appear to have been influenced by the innovative ideas put forth both at the conference and in other forums.

For example, the Study Committee of Population Problems, an advisory organ for the government on population policy, asserted at the General Assembly of April 1974 the necessity of attaining a zero rate of population growth in Japan. Participants of the First Japan Population Conference recommended that the Japanese nation take a stance on human reproduction that would lead to a stabilization or reduction in population size in the future—specifically, that the number of children per couple be two, rather than three. This recommendation was based on demographic studies forecasting Japan's future population.[6]

6 Okazaki (1973), using Japan's 1970 population of 103.7 million as a baseline

Such statements should not be viewed as explicit proposals for Japanese governmental policy, but as the consensus of population specialists, critics, and informed laymen. The Japanese public tends to think that Japan's recent population growth has placed a burden on their daily lives, according to several recent surveys.[7] Therefore those who are concerned about the continued growth of Japan's population are not limited to the population specialists. It will be difficult, however, and will take some time, for the public to learn the relationship between general social problems, the present growth rate of the population, and their current childbearing—that is, to become fully aware of the population problem and reduce their fertility because of it.

If policies limiting families to two children were to be launched in the future, what might be the outcome? Obviously, there would be many advantages as well as disadvantages. Material resources would be conserved to a great extent, such as staple products for living, and fewer financial resources would be devoted to raising children. As for psychological benefits, attention would be focused on each individual of a family and the emphasis would be on a better quality of living. On the other hand, with social policy directed toward small family size, social welfare would be oriented toward the construction of small housing units, and recreation and other public facilities would be geared to small families. As a result, there would be pressure on couples to conform to a stereotyped, nuclear family of two children. In my opinion, rigid conformity to such a family stereotype is not conducive to the future prosperity of this nation, for social and racial reasons. One disadvantage is that the small family would foster strong individualism

and different assumptions about average family size, projected a population of 121.2 million in the year 2015 if the average number of children per couple were two, i.e., if the net reproduction rate (NRR) of 1.0 were maintained into the future. His projections for a hypothetical three-child average family size showed a population of 132.8 million in 2015. Freika (1973:142–43), using a somewhat different methodology, projected the population to be 136.0 million in the period 2010–2015, if the NRR of 1.0 continued, and showed that under this condition the population would stabilize after 2040 at about 138 million.

7 In response to our own optional country-specific survey, which was administered after the main VOC questionnaire, 90 percent of the respondents said that Japan's current population was too large and 58 percent agreed with the statement that "a decrease of population is desirable." Sixty-one percent agreed that birth control should be encouraged as a future orientation of Japanese policy. Because of the small proportion of respondents who answered this portion of the questionnaire (59 percent of the urban and 21 percent of the rural), the results were not reported in the main body of the report.

in children, in contrast with the large family, where mutual help, cooperation, and sociability are emphasized. The second disadvantage is that planning for small families throughout the country—which is limited in area and densely populated—would be likely to influence personality formation by encouraging the trait of insularism, already a major disvalued aspect of our national character.

The ideal public policy is the one that offers equal opportunity to families of different sizes to live in happiness and satisfaction. The social policy of the future should ensure that all citizens, regardless of family size and background, enjoy their lives without being forced to limit their family size to two or three children. In the absence of demographic regimentation, some families would have four or five children while other families would have one child or none at all. The result would likely be an average of two or three children. The principle of freedom to determine family size would ensure the fulfillment of individual needs and protect individual rights.

On the other hand, as our findings indicate, there is still a great reluctance on the part of many Japanese to consider the impact of their actions on society at large. Childbearing is regarded solely as one's private concern; societal problems and individual decisions exist separately. Population specialists consider it a dilemma that the fertility rate depends entirely on individual decision-making. They warn that if parents continue to bear more than the two children needed for replacement there will be greater population pressure within the next 30 years than there is today, the result of which could be catastrophic. (See, for example, the projections for Japan cited above from Okazaki, 1973.)

Contrary to such opinions, however, many top policymakers are pronatalist. They contend that the average life span is increasing because of new medical technology. They also fear that, as a result of the fertility decline since the 1960s, there will be a shortage of labor within the next two or three decades. Faced with a declining proportion of population in the younger age groups, they believe that encouragement of fertility is desirable.

As is clear from the preceding statements, attitudes toward fertility—the values of childbearing—are quite varied. With such divergent opinions, a crucial issue for the Japanese is reaching a consensus, one that resolves the essential problem of population policy.

In my opinion, it is useless to make recommendations for changing people's behavior, given the existence of such a cleavage. It is necessary to wait. In this age of freedom and respect for individual rights,

it is not desirable to alter demographic behavior by imposing a stringent policy to limit family size directly or to influence it indirectly, for example by taxing large families at higher rates than small families. Such policies would not work. On the contrary, they would arouse opposition from the general public.

What would succeed are educating the public about population and environmental conditions and then waiting for individual action. Just as the people of this country practiced birth control methods without waiting for the government to endorse family planning, when they see that limiting family size is related to their own welfare, they will probably have the wisdom to continue controlling family size so that the population problem does not become critical.

At the present stage, while people are individualistic and the connection between individuals and society is not widely recognized as having bearing on the population problem, it is premature to expect people to control family size for societal reasons. However, it is likely that with the present nationwide campaign to warn people about the population crisis and with abundant information and educational media, the time will come when all people will have to consider their individual lives in relation to future population. In this way, the population problem will ultimately be reflected in the attitudes and opinions of each individual, for reasons reaching beyond their immediate family situation. One can say that as human beings develop, enriching their wisdom through education, the imposition of a specific population policy will not be necessary. If Japan should succeed in this approach, she will certainly become a model for the world in controlling population growth via individual knowledge and free will. This step will definitely take some time, however, both for motivating the individual action and for influencing the change of population growth.

But this does not mean that policies aimed at fostering demographic change are unnecessary. It is essential to create an atmosphere in which people initiate their own action by referring to the condition of society or the status of population. What policies are needed to facilitate individual action toward solution of population problems?

In the first place, further welfare-oriented policies are urgently required to take care of children in day-care facilities. Shortages of such facilities are still recognized in Japan today. Such physical facilities are necessary before people can undertake individual action: facilities for rearing children as well as for taking care of the aged after their children have left home. Provision of such facilities would remove anxiety and make individual decision-making much easier. In the second place,

improvement of the living conditions in every household should be considered. Inflation, poor housing, disruption of surroundings through traffic, pollution, and other public nuisances—people have suffered to a great extent trying to maintain a decent standard of living while supporting their families. Under such circumstances, children cannot be brought up to be valued by parents and appreciated by society, and no one can afford to consider individual child rearing and its relation to social problems. Thus, to initiate a compromise between individual interests and social involvement, improvements of living conditions through public policy are essential.

A serious problem related to population growth in this country is the high concentration of population in urban areas. Owing to Japan's rapid economic expansion and industrialization, urban growth has far exceeded growth in rural areas, causing a host of difficulties: congestion, noise, air pollution, and various social and economic dislocations. In response to our country-specific survey, 74 percent of the sample said the solution of unequal population distribution is the responsibility of the government. Policies aimed at reducing the high concentrations of population in the major urban centers, in my opinion, deserve urgent attention.

To conclude, after a better living standard is achieved, individuals are likely to turn their eyes toward public affairs. Individual concern for family planning is likely to become social concern for population. Until then, social policy should encourage the people to turn their eyes to social problems. At that stage, the value of children can be regarded from a fresh point of view—namely, through a convergence of individual problems and social concerns and with a consensus of laymen, specialists, and policymakers.

appendix and appendix table

Appendix Country-specific questionnaire (Japan)

A number of country-specific questions were administered after the completion of the major interview survey. Completion of this portion of the questionnaire was optional. The country-specific items were self-administered and the questionnaire was to be returned by mail. Because of the small number of respondents who answered the country-specific questions, a tabulation of results is omitted and instead only a description and a translation of the questions are presented here.

Themes of the country-specific questions

1. Views about the present population in Japan in relation to having and educating children
   a. Perception of the population of Tokyo, of the other districts surveyed, and of the country as a whole
   b. Opinions about raising children in a polluted environment
2. Changes in attitudes after having children
   a. Change of conjugal affection between spouses
   b. Anxieties about raising children
3. Opinions about educating children in contemporary society
   a. Change in parental authority
   b. Feelings of parental protectiveness toward children resulting from competition and struggle up the "educational ladder"
   c. Opinion regarding sexual emancipation and childbearing
   d. Opinion regarding sex education of children

Actual questions

The following questions are specifically concerned with our country; please fill them in when you have time. Consultation with your husband or wife is possible, but certain questions will be asked of each of you separately, so please pay attention to that. When you have completed the questionnaire, please mail it to the address written on the enclosed envelope.

Address: _____ (Ward/District)
Name of husband: _____
Name of wife: _____

General impression of the major survey

Please write your frank impressions of the survey you have just completed.

Attitude toward population problems

I am going to ask you several questions concerning population problems. Circle the appropriate number.

1. Do you think the present population of Japan is too large?
   1. Too large.
   2. A little large.
   3. Appropriate.
   4. A little small.
   5. Too small.

2. Do you think that the population of Japan will continue to increase in the future?
   1. Continue to increase.
   2. Increase and then decrease.
   3. Same as at present.
   4. Continue to decrease.

3. Which of the following opinions do you agree with?
   1. Population is the basis of national power; therefore an increase of population is favorable.
   2. It gets harder to live when population increases; therefore a decrease of population is desirable.

4. What do you think of urban density and rural sparsity?
   1. It is the natural consequence of the development of civilization and industry.
   2. A political solution should be sought.
   3. I don't think that present-day Japan is worried about the density-sparsity problem of the country.

5. Which way do you think Japan's population policy should be oriented?
   1. Encouragement of childbirth.
   2. Control of childbirth.
   3. Population policy is not necessary.

6. What do you think of the increase in the population of the aged?
   1. The increase of the aged population results from the diffusion of technology of medical care and other welfare policies in advanced countries and therefore is not undesirable.
   2. One should bear more children to moderate the population of the elderly.
   3. I don't think that the present age structure of the population is too old.

7. Do you think that the metropolitan city of Tokyo and its vicinity are overcrowded?
   1. Too crowded.
   2. A little crowded.
   3. Moderately populated.
   4. A little underpopulated.
   5. Very underpopulated.

8. [*For those who answered "crowded" in Question 7.*]
What do you think is the appropriate size of a population?
   1. 20–30 percent less than the present population.
   2. 50 percent less than the present population.
   3. One-third of the present population.

9. Do you think that the population of Tokyo (or your local district) and its vicinity will continue to increase (decrease)?[1]
   1. Increase (decrease) sharply.
   2. Increase and then decrease (decrease gradually).
   3. Same as at present.
   4. Continue to decrease (increase gradually).
   5. (Increase sharply—local survey).

10. [*For urban respondents only.*]
Density of the urban population has produced many harmful effects. Please circle the items whose effects you think are strong. Write additional items if you think they are necessary.

1. Shortage of housing	11. Shortage of green areas and parks
2. Narrowness of house	12. Loss of contact with nature
3. Noise	13. Increase of commuting time to work place
4. Garbage disposal	14. Increase of psychological stress
5. Air pollution	15. Crime
6. Traffic accidents	16. Unconcern for others
7. Traffic density	17. Egoism
8. Loss of sunshine in the house	18. Feeling of loneliness
9. Fear of disaster	19. Decrease of morality
10. River and sea pollution	

Attitude toward Tokyo

[*For urban respondents only.*]
I am going to ask you about the city of Tokyo. Do you want to continue living in Tokyo?
   1. Continue to live in Tokyo.
      1. Going to stay in the present residence.
      2. Want to stay in Tokyo, but somewhere other than here.
   2. Do not want to live in Tokyo.
      1. Want to move to a local area as soon as possible.
      2. Want to move to a local area after getting old.
      3. Want to move to a local area if the following things are satisfied (circle the numbers you think are appropriate):
         1. Occupation.

1 Phrases in parentheses apply to rural sample. "Local district" refers to rural district of sample.

2. Education of children
3. Benefit from culture.
4. Living conditions.

Change of conjugal affections

I am going to ask you several questions about parent-child relationships.

1. Did you experience any change in conjugal relations after having a child?
   1. Conjugal affection became deeper because of having a child.
   2. No change of affection.
   3. Affection toward children became deeper and conjugal affection lessened.

2. Objectively considered, do you think of yourselves as overprotective parents?
   1. More or less overprotective.
   2. Just moderately protective.
   3. "Laissez-faire" parents.

3. Are you confident about bringing up your children?
   1. Confident.
   2. Not very confident.
   3. Should bring them up regardless of having confidence or not.

4. With which items do you agree concerning the relationship between one's sex life and bearing children?
   1. One's sex life and bearing children are two different matters. People should please themselves with their sex life.
   2. It is a mistake to think separately of one's sex life and bearing children. Sex exists for procreation.
   3. The pleasure of one's sex life and the duty of procreation can coexist.

5. The following items concern fears and anxieties for children. Please circle the number which indicates the degree of fear and anxiety you feel.

	Very anxious	A little anxious	Medium	A little less anxious	Not anxious at all
1. Child's health	+2	+1	0	−1	−2
2. Cost of raising children	+2	+1	0	−1	−2
3. Discipline for children	+2	+1	0	−1	−2
4. Accident of children	+2	+1	0	−1	−2
5. Matters concerned with children's friends	+2	+1	0	−1	−2
6. Matters concerned with children's play	+2	+1	0	−1	−2
7. Abilities of children	+2	+1	0	−1	−2
8. Sex education of children	+2	+1	0	−1	−2

6. Husband and wife please answer these questions about parental authority separately.

Opinion of husband:

1. Authority of husband
   1. Has become stronger.
   2. Has become weaker.
   3. Has not changed.
2. Authority of wife
   1. Has become stronger.
   2. Has become weaker.
   3. Has not changed.

Opinion of wife:

1. Authority of husband
   1. Has become stronger.
   2. Has become weaker.
   3. Has not changed.
2. Authority of wife
   1. Has become stronger.
   2. Has become weaker.
   3. Has not changed.

Sex education

1. Which subject is the most desirable regarding sex education for the child?
   1. Sexual morality.
   2. Scientific knowledge about sex.
   3. Dignity of life.
   4. Sex education not necessary.

2. Who is responsible for sex education?
   1. Parents.
   2. School.
   3. Mass media.
   4. Leave as it is.

Pollution

An opinion exists among young people today that they do not want to bear children in such a polluted environment. What do you think about this opinion?

1. Completely agree.
2. Understandable to some extent.
3. Not always true.
4. Cannot understand at all.

That is all. Thank you very much for your cooperation.

Appendix Table Factor structures of 45 attitude items after varimax rotation
(Analysis based on Japanese data only)

Item	Factor I	II	III	IV	V	VI	Communality	Mean score
36 One of the best things about having children is that you are never lonely	.58	.04	.05	.08	−.23	.20	.46	6.5
14 Having children around makes a stronger bond between husband and wife	.55	.17	.03	−.03	.01	−.10	.35	6.2
15 One of the highest purposes of life is to have children	.54	.36	−.07	−.04	−.01	.11	.45	5.8
20 Life for most people would be pretty dull without children	.50	.02	.03	.04	−.04	−.00	.27	6.2
8 It is only natural that a man should want children	.49	.25	.01	.08	.04	.23	.38	5.9
13 All the efforts a parent makes for his children are worthwhile in the long run	.48	−.02	−.03	.13	.25	−.19	.36	6.2
40 The really important things in life can be learned only from the experience of raising children	.48	.24	.01	.28	.09	.25	.45	5.5
6 Having children gives a person a special incentive to succeed in life	.47	.03	−.00	−.00	.06	.25	.30	6.7
22 After becoming a parent, a person is less likely to behave immorally	.45	−.08	.15	.13	.27	−.09	.34	6.1
31 The family with children is the basis for all that is good in our society	.45	.23	−.13	.26	.28	−.04	.44	5.8
29 Just the feeling a parent gets of being needed is enough to make having children worthwhile	.43	.20	.05	.09	.16	.38	.42	5.6
18 Having children is the most important function of marriage	.43	.46	.08	.18	−.03	−.04	.45	5.2

5 Most married couples would be happier if they did not have any children	.42	−.12	−.25	−.06	−.07	.07	.27	6.6
16 A girl becomes a woman only after she is a mother	.41	.25	.13	.33	.22	.25	.45	5.4
7 It is important to have children so that the family traditions will live on	.09	.71	.00	.04	.03	.02	.53	4.7
34 A man has a duty to have children to continue the family name	.15	.68	.10	.20	−.08	.00	.54	4.0
2 A good reason for having children is that they can help when parents are too old to work	−.02	.66	.13	−.02	−.04	.10	.48	2.7
25 One of the best things about having children is the true loyalty they show to their parents	.03	.51	−.00	.19	.09	.31	.41	4.1
12 It is a person's duty to society to have children	.18	.48	.08	.04	.31	−.31	.48	4.3
35 A person can feel that part of him lives on after death if he has children	.25	.45	.04	.08	.12	.16	.32	4.8
44 A person who has no children can never really be happy	.06	.43	−.07	.48	−.04	.06	.43	3.6
43 The family with children is the only place in the modern world where a person can feel comfortable and happy	−.09	.42	−.06	.51	−.00	.18	.49	2.9
19 Children limit you in what you want to do and where you want to go	.04	−.09	.70	.09	−.01	−.14	.54	4.5
39 When you have children, you have to give up a lot of other things that you enjoy	.09	−.09	.65	.13	.00	−.07	.48	4.3
10 Always having children around is a great mental strain	.02	−.05	.63	−.11	.08	.00	.43	3.4
37 Raising children is a heavy financial burden for most people	.03	−.06	.51	.08	.18	−.03	.33	4.8
32 Before having a child, a couple should consider whether they would rather use their money for something else	.05	.13	.49	.05	.08	−.01	.28	2.5

Appendix Table *(continued)*

Item	Factor I	II	III	IV	V	VI	Communality	Mean score
1 Caring for children is a tedious and boring job	−.11	.11	.41	−.03	−.07	.10	.22	2.7
21 A young couple is not fully accepted in the community until they have children	.09	.00	.14	.60	−.12	.03	.41	2.5
27 A person with children is looked up to in the community more than a person without children	.02	.13	.04	.55	.05	.34	.45	3.0
17 It is the parents' fault if their children are not successful in life	.02	.03	.12	.49	.08	−.07	.27	3.8
45 A boy becomes a man only after he is a father	.27	.34	.17	.45	−.03	.10	.44	4.4
23 The first thing a couple should think about when deciding to have children is whether or not they can afford it	.03	.10	.14	.00	.64	.03	.45	5.1
9 A couple ought to think seriously about the inconveniences caused by children before they have any	−.03	−.04	.08	.04	.59	.09	.38	5.8
41 Before having a child, a couple should consider whether it would interfere with the wife's work or not	−.09	.10	.23	−.09	.48	.25	.38	5.4
33 One of the best things about being a parent is the chance to teach children what they should do and what they should not do	.17	.19	−.09	.11	.26	.57	.49	4.2
4 It is only with a child that a person can feel completely free to express his love and affection	.18	−.02	−.03	.08	.03	.46	.26	5.8
28 It is only natural that a woman should want children	.39	.15	.01	.23	−.04	.11	.25	6.0

3	Raising children is an act of virtue	.31	.37	−.01	.04	.07	.23	.30	5.0
42	Having children is a sign of blessing on a marriage	.23	.38	−.03	.18	.16	−.17	.30	4.6
30	A person who has been a good parent can feel completely satisfied with his achievements in life	.26	.06	−.12	.29	.32	.17	.31	5.5
38	It isn't right for a couple to interfere with nature by deciding to limit the number of children they will have	.23	−.08	−.00	.38	.23	−.16	.30	5.1
11	Considering the pressures from family and friends, a person really doesn't have much choice whether or not to have children	.03	.28	.31	−.06	.02	.21	.24	2.8
26	Having children causes many disagreements and problems between husband and wife	.08	−.09	−.33	−.08	−.09	−.15	.17	3.0
24	For most people, it is inevitable to have children	.12	.11	−.09	.24	.14	.11	.13	4.8
Eigenvalue		7.27	2.45	2.20	1.70	1.60	1.41	16.63	

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